The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LXXII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 1932 NUMBER 926

Contents

The Week 55

Editorials

Roosevelt's First Rocket 58
Hitler and German Big Business 59

General Articles

Labor on the Warpath?.....J. B. S. Hardman 61
Michelet.....Edmund Wilson 64
The Farmers Go on Strike.....
.....Donald R. Murphy and Bruce Bliven 66
That's His Story.....Felix Ray 69
Washington Notes.....T. R. B. 70
Deep South Notes.....Stark Young 71
Childless (verse).....L. A. G. Strong 72
Music in Russia Today.....Ashley Pettis 73
Not on the Ticker Tape.....L. M. N. 74

Correspondence 75

Reviews of Books

April Hopes.....Robert Morss Lovett 77
Better Homes Tomorrow?.....Edith Elmer Wood 78
Ellen Glasgow's South.....Clifton Fadiman 79
Cutting the Pattern.....Louis M. Simon 79
War and Democracy.....Herman Simpson 80
Book Notes 80

The Week

PRESIDENT Hoover's new economic conference is to be an attempt to make business and banking forces do what conservative economists have maintained they would do spontaneously under conditions like the present. Though we have no advance knowledge of what is to be said, we are willing to predict that it will be, in substance, about as follows. Credit resources are abundant and interest rates are low; therefore this is the time to borrow. You can use the money to replenish your low stock of materials. This is the time to do that, too, because commodity prices have reached rock bottom and are on the way up. When by this action you have removed a large part of the visible surpluses from the markets, prices will naturally go on rising on that account. This will make it profitable for you to manufacture the materials you have bought; hence you will increase employment and further stimulate recovery. The psychological conditions are correct for a movement of this kind, since the upward trend of stock and bond prices bears witness to the disappearance of panic. Then, too, as the bond market improves it will be possible to float new securities and invest new capital, thus further stimulating recovery. The government has created the credit resources, it has ended panic; now business must do the rest in its own interest.

IT IS conceivable that a program of this kind will produce a rise in the economic patient's temperature. But it is doubtful whether the improvement would last more than a few months, and even if it did, there is a certainty that these "natural" forces (artificially stimulated) would not lead to permanent prosperity. Even in 1929 there was more wheat and cotton than the world could buy at a fair price; what assurance is there that commodity price increases will continue long? The present increases arise more from short crops in this country than from enlarged demand; therefore they do not mean much larger aggregate purchasing power for the farmers. If we had bumper crops while prices were going up—as we did in 1924—the situation would be entirely different. And what about labor's purchasing power? Wages have recently dropped to mere subsistence levels in many industries; an abnormally large number of unemployed existed before the depression, and industrial efficiency has so increased during the past two years that the 1929 output could be resumed with far fewer operatives than were needed then. There is no prospect of disposing of the surplus in foreign markets. These are considerations which the Hoover recovery policy has completely ignored.

MEANWHILE it is necessary to keep on calling attention to the untruthfulness of the reports of business recovery to date. In spite of columns of dispatches reporting miscellaneous openings of factories, mines and mills—and the absence of dispatches reporting closings and lay-offs—the New York Times index, adjusted for seasonal influences and based on an average of freight-car loadings, steel-mill activity, electric-power production, automobile production and carded cotton-cloth production, has fallen steadily since June, reaching the lowest point of the depression so far on August 13.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There was a rise of eight-tenths of one point during the last week in freight-car loadings, of half a point in steel-mill activity, and of slightly over two points in cotton cloth, but these trifling increases were weighed down by larger recession in the other figures. In the same week bank debits outside New York—the best single measure of business transactions—declined to the previous low level reached in July, in spite of the small advance in prices. The Employment Service of the United States Department of Labor reports in words an improvement in employment which is contradicted both by their own figures and by those of the Department of Commerce. The figures show a drop of the number employed between June and July of over 3 percent, and there is no sign that the trend has been reversed in August.

THIS week marks the fifth anniversary of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti in Boston. Since that tragic night of August 22 when the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in spite of the well founded doubts of their guilt, put these two anarchists to death, there has been no lack of other legal victims of class justice. A report of the American Civil Liberties Union states that never before in its history have there been so many issues involving civil liberty before the courts of this country as during the past year. We have had the Scottsboro case, in which seven Negro boys were sentenced to death on the flimsiest of evidence; we have had the violence and terrorism of Bell and Harlan counties, where five miners have been convicted of murder by prejudiced juries. Outside the courts, we have seen four workers shot down and killed before the Ford gates at Dearborn, we have seen the shooting of workers in Melrose Park near Chicago, and the killing of three Negroes during the eviction riots. Though the Civil Liberties Union mentions the remarkable absence of food and unemployment riots, it nevertheless points out that the past year has been one of violence and bloodshed on the part of the authorities of the law. This year has seen, too Governor Rolfe's refusal to rectify, even at this late day, the outrageous miscarriage of justice in the case of Mooney and Billings. If we would honor the memory of Sacco and Vanzetti, we must remember that they would have us work for the victims and probable victims of injustice who are still alive.

AT THE Ottawa Conference it was proved that the ambitious project to turn the British Commonwealth of Nations into a self-sustaining economic unit is impossible. The participants, indeed, disavowed this project before they began, yet no auspices more favorable to the tendency can be imagined than the National government of Great Britain and the Conservative Cabinet in Canada. When the difficulties of adjusting all the interests involved were actually faced, much less was done even than the several delegations had hoped for. Though certain preferential tariffs and other reciprocal arrangements were agreed upon, it is doubtful whether any party will really profit. To the extent that Canadian wheat is substituted for United States wheat in the British market, for instance, our wheat will be forced upon the rest of the world market, thus depressing the price at which the bulk of Canadian wheat is sold. And though the agreements may somewhat increase the cost of living for British workers, it is uncertain whether they will receive any compensating gain in employment through concessions in the Dominion markets for British manufactured goods. Some exports from the United States will be shut out of Canada—we shall probably lose somewhat less than $50,000,000 in trade. But we ourselves destroyed much more than that amount of Canadian trade by passing the Smoot-Hawley tariff. Once more it is demonstrated that the world cannot become richer by interposing barriers against the exchange of goods.

SO FAR, Governor Roosevelt has conducted the Walker hearings with skill and firmness. He has mastered the voluminous testimony taken by the legislative investigating committee, and his questions show that he is leaving no stone unturned to get to the bottom of the matter. As day after day goes by, Walker and his counsel make a worse and worse impression. Glib evasions are punctured by disconcerting inquiries. While the Governor is careful not to allow the Mayor to play the martyr by denying him any chance of bringing forward evidence that might clear the record, he is quick to stop excursions into irrelevant material which can only delay and befog the proceedings. The final recourse of Walker is proof enough of his bad case. He is seeking refuge in a plea to the courts that the Governor is acting unconstitutionally in conducting the examination and has no power to remove him. That is equivalent to saying: "I am hopeless of trying to vindicate my honor or defend the conduct of my office. These are matters of trifling importance to me. But I have a property right in my job, which, because of a technical interpretation of the Constitution and the law, the Governor has no right to take away from me, no matter how culpable I am."

ON September 3, 4 and 5, in New York City, the Conference for Progressive Labor Action will hold its first convention. This organization, which has been at work for several years with some success, favors an active policy of extending American unionism and purging it of corruption and defeatism, an effective political party of farmers and workers built on economic organization of these classes, a united front of workers in all fields of activity and a planned economic system operated in the interest of the masses. Unlike the Communists, it does not attempt to found a new system of unions to compete with those already ex-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

isting, but rather to strengthen and purify the historic trade-union movement. Unlike the Communists also, it is unhampered by dogmatic, centralized control exercised from Moscow; it is more readily adaptable to American conditions. If there is hope of any strengthening of the labor movement, a group like this ought to embody it. We shall watch with keen interest the action of their convention and the subsequent developments.

IN A LETTER addressed to the executives of the great retail clothing establishments of the country, Sidney Hillman, the general president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, which is at present carrying on a strike of 20,000 in New York City, has asked the retail executives to join with the union and clothing manufacturers in the fight against the sweatshops. Hillman points out that since the depression a number of unscrupulous employers have been attempting to bring back the demoralized labor conditions which existed in the clothing industry before organized labor and certain enlightened manufacturers established living wages, regulated hours and humane working conditions. As three-quarters of a million workers and their families depend upon this industry for their livelihood, cut-throat competition, according to Hillman, will spell complete ruin not only to the workers but also to the manufacturers and retailers through the reduction of purchasing power. As a remedy he suggests establishing a board of retailers, manufacturers and workers "empowered to supervise the conditions under which clothing is being made and to lay down minimum standards of manufacture." This is use of the power of the union to fight not merely the exploiter, but the conditions which force him to exploit.

THE American League for India's Freedom, a group of American citizens organized to aid the Indian struggle, recently issued a manifesto signed by sixty persons, many of them well known, expressing their "unreserved support of India's right to freedom" and endorsing the policy of non-violent non-coöperation. The manifesto condemns "the extreme measures of violent suppression adopted by the British government, making the Indian National Congress in effect an illegal conspiracy," not only as "unwarranted," but as "dangerous in provoking a resort to counter-violence." Among the signers are Mayor Frank Murphy of Detroit, Judge Julian W. Mack, Norman Thomas and many progressive editors, publicists and others. We do not suppose that the Tory government which now rules Great Britain cares very much what sixty American libertarians say, except as their words may have some slight effect in strengthening the resistance of the Indians; and that resistance is already being stiffened, to an incalculable degree, by the acts of the English in India. If Great Britain had deliberately set out to convince the Indians that their only hope lies in a resort to "force—force to the utmost," it would have taken very much the same course that it has pursued.

IN 1930, the United States exported to the Soviet Union goods valued at $114,399,000. In 1931 the total was smaller, but still amounted to $103,669,000. But in the first four months of 1932, the total of exports from this country to Russia dropped to $5,116,000, as against $50,799,000 in the same period of the year before—a ten-fold reduction. This means men out of work in automobile factories, machinery factories, agricultural-implement factories and many others. The Soviet government would be glad to buy from us not only as much as in 1930, but far more. It needs the goods; we need the employment. But it cannot do so because we will not accept goods in return. This is the meaning of the rumored Soviet bond issue—reported in The New York Times, but promptly denied thereafter. Perhaps we would lend the Russians—at 10 percent—some money to help keep our factories busy. Although no other foreign bond issue could probably be sold in the United States today, the credit of the great anti-capitalist state is, paradoxically, as good as gold. Every Soviet promise to pay has been met on the nail. What is still more important, the U.S.S.R. has the capacity to pay because its system, unravaged by the world-wide depression, shows the ability to produce and export ever-larger quantities of useful goods.

THE royalist rebellion in Spain has apparently succeeded only in strengthening the Republic; for the collapse of the Right opposition now makes easier the eventual settlement of the vexing Catalonian question. To the student of revolutions the incident at once recalls the Kapp *Putsch* in Germany in 1920. Once again the general strike has been utilized to put down a military coup. It would be misleading, however, to push the parallel very far. The military efficiency which characterized the German affair was conspicuously lacking in Spain. Police measures alone were sufficient to protect the government in Madrid. Only in Seville was the insurrection able to capture the machinery of government. There it proved impotent in the face of the strike and General Sanjurjo, who had captured the city, was taken while fleeing into Portugal. In Madrid the leaders of the revolt were jailed within a few hours. As the popular uprising against the royalists has been largely localized in Seville, it is unlikely that the Spanish Republic will immediately be menaced from the Left as Germany was in 1920 when the general strike threatened to deepen into a revolt of the workers.

THOUGH it is contended that the twelfth hour of capitalism will be at hand when Altman's or Tiffany's puts its name over the entrance, we incline to the belief that the system will be at an end when The Saturday Evening Post no longer appears on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the newsstands. Certainly the depths of the depression can be judged by the fortunes of this periodical more accurately than by figures of car loadings or bank clearings. Anyone who picks up a copy to read the advertisements, as we sometimes do, must nowadays receive a shock. One gets the impression, from the weary columns of reading matter stringing over page after page, that its advertising has almost disappeared. Of course it is still far ahead of all competitors, but The Saturday Evening Post without advertising is utterly inconceivable, while The New Republic without advertising would be almost like an ordinary issue. The record confirms the great fall of the chief organ of American money-making. In June, 1929, when it really flourished, four weekly issues carried a total of 1,024,395 agate lines; in June, 1932, the most it could muster was 129,505.

FRANCIS P. GARVAN, President of the Chemical Foundation, has again been writing letters and has again been sending out anti-debt cancellation propaganda by Garet Garrett. "The so-called gentlemen's agreement," writes Mr. Garvan, is equivalent to a "debt repudiation cartel. Through long experiences we have been able to identify the great mass of foreign propaganda which has been made to flow through our press, many of our educational leaders, writers and publishers. Most of them are the lip-men of the German-American, English-American and French-American international concerns whose only American interest in their percent." We pause to wonder what the American interest of the chemical industry and of Mr. Garvan is. But he goes on, "The truth has been forced upon us that the countries of Europe are united and determined to destroy the supremacy of the United States. Is it not time for all of us to click our heels?" The military expression is not out of place, for it appears that what is particularly worrying Mr. Garvan now is the new nitrogen cartel, which he says is for the purpose of destroying the cornerstone of our chemical industry. This proves, he concludes, that "the gentlemen's agreement of Europe is a military alliance." You must "watch your newspaper and your magazines and your banker and see on which side of the water they stand." All of which is a neat way of arguing that unless you stand for high tariffs for the American chemical trust and against mitigation of the world depression by means of war-debt reduction, you are a traitor. This letter ought to be Exhibit A in the array of evidence to prove that capitalistic nationalism is the cause of war. If Mr. Garvan had been writing for the Communists he couldn't have furnished them with a better argument.

IT IS one of the wastes of our age that moving pictures, which are such powerful vehicles for propaganda, have, when used for this purpose, been so badly handled. A recent development has been the production of regular blood and thunder melodramas that are interrupted at intervals while characters make moral speeches. The latest of this sort has achieved more than usual success. This play, in an appropriate studio fashion, is called "American Madness" and is the story of a bank president who puts his faith in small business men. The glorified banker makes several earnest speeches about financial policy. Banks, he says, must lend to honest small business, or else these enterprises will fail and cause more unemployment. The bank directors who argue for liquid reserves are the villains of the piece, and the small business men aid the President in his hour of need! There is a very well done episode of a run on the bank. The theme of the whole play is confidence. Here is a movie that may even boost stocks a point or two. What is needed now is a movie showing that war-debt cancellation helped John Brown's business and made it possible for him to marry his beautiful Jane.

SINCE the articles on the farmers' strike in this issue of The New Republic were written, it has steadily extended its operations and has become more serious. Before this issue reaches our readers, still more dramatic occurrences may have been recorded. So far, the strike has spread from Sioux City to Omaha, and is making headway in neighboring states. The leaders have even threatened to attempt the seemingly impossible by picketing Chicago. A settlement between the milk producers and distributors appears about to be reached in Omaha and Council Bluffs, as it has been in Sioux City. Meanwhile the embargo on other foodstuffs is strictly maintained. The strikers have gone so far as to stop trains and turn cattle loose along the right of way. If this continues, federal authorities are likely to act. State officials, however, are not so eager to oppose the strikers. Governor Olsen of Minnesota, the only Farmer-Labor governor in the nation, has expressed his sympathy with the strikers and has even hinted that he would be glad to apply martial law to aid them. The farmers are, in most places, distributing milk free for children and invalids. Their quarrel is not with the consumer.

Roosevelt's First Rocket

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S first speech in the formal campaign has great merits. It is a direct reply to the Hoover acceptance speech; by joining the issue it returns to the tradition of high political debate. It is well phrased, it is full of good sense and humor; it shows a knowledge of facts; it is firm and pliable, not overstuffed and musty. Like the best arguments so far made on the Republican side—notably those of Secretary Ogden Mills—it is far more effective as an exposition of the opponent's weakness than as an alternative program. If this sort of thing continues, the campaign will accomplish the desirable result of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

puncturing the pretensions of both the old parties.

The President, as Mr. Roosevelt implies, is in a ridiculous position because he took the responsibility for prosperity but will not accept the responsibility for depression. That is a point which needs continual emphasis. Either government influences economic affairs or it does not. If it does, it must take blame as well as praise; it must be sure that its policies are both wise and effective. Mr. Roosevelt believes that Mr. Hoover was largely responsible for prosperity—for those very features of it which were unsound and led to depression. The continual increase of productive capacity was encouraged by the administration. Faced by the fact—which he never really acknowledged—that domestic purchasing power to buy the product was lacking because of increased unemployment and the agricultural depression, Secretary Hoover pointed to foreign markets as the way out. A high tariff having prevented foreigners from paying for what they bought, Mr. Hoover said that American loans abroad would enable them to keep on buying. At home, too, the expansion of credit for unlimited enlargement of productive facilities, as well as for speculation, was encouraged by Washington. Plain signs of warning were ignored. Of course, this rickety structure was bound to collapse.

The Hoover record after the depression offers fair game to the Democratic candidate, and his aim at it is deadly. The repeated false statements that everything was well, the repeated predictions of recovery, the excuse found in the European situation—largely caused by our own disturbance—all this he has but to recount in order to damn his opponent. This, the most showy part of the speech, was the easiest to do; it has been done before by others.

Then follows by far the best section of the argument—not the most deft as political debate, but the most important as political philosophy. While Hoover prates of individualism, the bulk of industry is concentrated in a few hands; most ownership is not direct, but is made through the great, impersonal agency of the stock market; and the flow of capital is channeled through a score or more of investment houses. On what these few institutions do or don't do, the individual lives of most Americans depend. Which individuals is Hoover really talking about—the few with power or the many dependent on them? Which individualism does he defend—the individualism of those who are "permitted to make industrial cannon-fodder of the lives of half the population of the United States," or the individualism of the victims?

But the Roosevelt speech is like a skyrocket, which, after a showering rush into the heavens, pops off into a few weak and quickly extinguished colored lights. What is his conclusion? He wants the truth told about all security issues; he wants holding companies put under federal, rather than state regulation; he demands federal regulation of speculative exchanges, better supervision of national banks, less use of credit in speculation, the separation of investment banking from commercial banking. He won't let the State Department pass on the legitimacy of foreign bond issues, and he won't try to influence the stock and bond markets. Yes, yes, but what about unemployment? What about the inadequate purchasing power of American wage-earners and farmers, which was so pointedly mentioned at the beginning of the speech? What about a better control of the flow of investment? What is to be done about the privately centralized powers which now operate industry and finance so badly? The conclusion of Mr. Roosevelt's speech sounds as if he thinks that the depression would never have happened if only Mr. Hoover had not encouraged speculation, had vetoed the Grundy tariff, had said nothing about foreign investments and had seen to better bank examination. Does Mr. Roosevelt believe the government ought to exercise economic power and do so to better purpose than Mr. Hoover has done? Or does he believe it ought, aside from waving a policeman's club occasionally, let things go their way? If every one of his admirable financial reforms had been in effect in 1928, the basic difficulties to which he calls attention would still have existed. It is unjust, naturally, to judge him until his whole program has been set forth. But at present it looks as if he were trying to have it both ways. It looks as if he were trying to please the radicals by showing how mistaken Hoover is and how badly he has done, and at the same time to please the conservatives by promising to refrain from doing what Hoover has done, without doing very much else.

Hitler and German Big Business

NEARLY a year ago, during last summer's bank panic, the German government was forced to take over Jacob Goldschmitt's Danat (Darmstädter und National) bank, the second largest financial institution in Germany, together with three smaller banks. Within the last few weeks, the German government has acquired a majority stock interest in the German steel trust, the Vereinigte Stahlwerke. These two transactions provide an explanation for much that is seemingly obscure in present-day German politics. A new and intimate relationship has been created between politics and business in Germany.

Suppose, in the United States, the Secretary of the Treasury in Washington possessed the power to designate directors of—let us say—the National City Bank, the First National Bank and the Guaranty Trust Company. Obviously, if this were so, American business interests would be immensely concerned with the character of the man who was going to be Secretary of the Treasury. Today in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Germany, it is almost a matter of life and death for business to control the appointment of the German Finance Minister. Many German business men have been greatly attracted by the anti-Communist, anti-trade-union speeches of Adolph Hitler, and have contributed liberally to the support of the Nazi movement. But the mere thought of a German Cabinet dominated by Hitler's wilder lieutenants—such men as Gregor Strasser and Joseph Goebbels—fills German business with horror.

German business will never willingly permit Hitler to form a cabinet of his own. The day-to-day guidance of bank credits affecting more than half of German industry is too delicate a job for the Nazis. This fact explains, more completely than anything else, why the fall of Brüning last May was followed, not by a Nazi government, but by the Big Business-Junker Ministry of Franz von Papen.

It is true that German business is ready, and even eager, for Hitler to have minority representation in the government. In this way, Hitler could be brought under control, and the Nazi movement tamed. A coalition Cabinet, including Hitler but dominated by the same forces which dominate the present von Papen government, is a distinct possibility. But while Big Business and its ally, Prussian Junkerdom, continue to control the aged von Hindenburg and the German Reichswehr, the Nazis will never obtain real power.

Germany today is the only country in the world, save Soviet Russia, in which commercial banking policy—the vital power of giving or withholding loans to business—is under the effective jurisdiction of the political government. Many shrewd observers believe that government and business in Germany can never again be unscrambled, and that the direct influence of economic groups upon German politics is bound to increase. The chief reason for this belief is that German heavy industry is greatly overcapitalized. At present levels of world trade, it cannot continue to meet fixed charges or hope to make profits. Ownership of industry, in many cases is becoming a liability, instead of an asset, to German capitalists. Conceivably these capitalists are going to say to themselves: "We're not making money. We won't be able to make money for years to come. We want to sell, and the only chance of selling is to sell to the government."

It is clear that it was precisely this sort of reasoning which led Herr Friedrich Flick, a few weeks ago, to unload his steel interests upon the German government. Flick, former associate of the sinister Hugo Stinnes, had succeeded through reckless stock manipulation in gaining control of the great Gelsenkirchener Bergwerks A. G., one of the largest units in the German steel cartel. Flick had outstanding huge bank loans, chiefly with the government-owned Danat (now the Dresdner) bank. There was no incentive for him to attempt to satisfy these loans, for Germany's steel industry, under its post-war capitalization, is not profitable. It was to his advantage to have the bank—which meant the German government—take over his loans, and compensate him for his equity. This he did, and last May the German government acquired outright ownership of 40 percent of Germany's steel production, 49 percent of its pig iron and 20 percent of its anthracite.

This Flick deal is still enveloped in mystery. It was put through in the last few hours before the resignation of the Brüning Cabinet. Flick was paid around 90 for his holdings, although Gelsenkirchener shares were then quoted at 32 on the Berlin Bourse. One report is that Flick was on the point of selling out to a syndicate headed by the Credit Lyonnais of Paris, and that the Brüning government had to intervene to prevent Germany's steel industry from falling into French hands on the eve of the Lausanne Conference.

What makes the Flick deal important, however, is the tendency it illustrates. "New" industries, with their comparatively modest capitalization (German radio, for example, and certain other branches of the electrical industry) can be counted upon to become profitable upon the slightest upturn in business. German capitalists will retain their control of this "new" industry. "Old" or "heavy" industry presents no further opportunities for profitable exploitation; the government, consequently, is welcome to it. There are signs that business in Great Britain is being driven to similar conclusions. It is freely predicted that before the present depression lifts, the English government will take over England's railroad system with the enthusiastic approbation of the railroad bondholders. It is likewise reported that the moribund Lancashire spinning industry would be extremely happy to be acquired by the government.

Events in Germany are moving rapidly, and the developments of the next few months should be of immense interest. It is possible that Germany is entering into a new form of economic and political organization—a sort of industrial fascism—which will prove to be the next temporary stage in the life of Western Europe. It cannot be said that it is an especially inviting prospect.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1932, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK CITY. BRUCE BLIVEN, PRESIDENT. DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER.

EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK ALVIN JOHNSON
E. C. LINDEMAN LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES
R. G. TUGWELL LEO WOLMAN

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS: FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Labor on the Warpath?

The Unions Are Beginning to Show Fight

ALL SIGNS point in the direction of a labor awakening. It may be slow in coming, and again, it may not be. Large bodies move slowly, but shifts of the popular mind have a way of making sudden and quick turns. The signs that bespeak the probability of a labor awakening are perhaps not many, but they are significant and potent. And perhaps this too is worth registering —many that have made an appearance did not come from New York.

Several months ago The Wall Street Journal commented:

> It is doubtful whether so rapid and extensive a deflation of the wage-earners' income has ever before taken place in the United States, with so nearly a total absence of open conflict between masters and men. . . . It seems a far cry back to the Homestead riots of 1892, to the Pullman and railroad strikes of two years later, or even to the Colorado mine disorders of 1914.

No, there is no open conflict between masters and men. Not yet. But not all seems to be quiet on the frontiers of control and submission. "Several months ago" may prove to be a far cry back from tomorrow.

Undoubtedly labor has been conspicuously inaudible these three tormented years of the depression. The mute acquiescence and almost total immobility of the multitudes have matched and surpassed the leaders' intellectual abdication. The central brains of labor failed to react to the demonstrated inability of business to function in a business way: it neither produced nor cared to think of constructive proposals as to ways out. The rank and file of labor were likewise delinquent in giving voice to effective and impressive protest. And in consequence governmental inaction, institutional smugness and taxing the economic traffic for all it can bear, and more, on the part of the captains of industry, business and finance, have had their ruinous free sway. However, it seems as if the vicious circle is about to be broken. The symptoms are here. If a single swallow makes no summer at least it presages its approach.

The appearance of Mr. Edward F. McGrady, legislative representative of the American Federation of Labor, at a hearing before a subcommittee of the Committee on Manufactures of the United States Senate and his straight from the shoulder talk was widely noted:

> There have been sporadic uprisings in a number of our industrial cities in the past six months [said Mr. McGrady], and in almost every case they passed it off or tossed it aside by saying it was led by Communists. There may have been Communists in those uprisings but as a matter of fact the great bulk of those people know nothing about communism. They want bread.
>
> The leaders of our organization have been preaching patience. We have gone back so many times to these workers asking them to wait and be patient, that the administration or the Congress or the states would do something, maybe industry itself might be able to do something; and we urged them to do nothing drastic, but I say to you gentlemen, advisedly, that if something is not done and starvation is going to continue and perhaps increase, the doors of revolt in this country are going to be thrown open.

Mr. McGrady is not reputed to be a radical. He has fought Bolshevism and the "Red menace" in and out of season. As a labor man, however, he reacts to unemployment not statistically, but emotionally and politically, a fact which is of outstanding significance. This reaction has been cumulative, as the following editorial in a recent issue of Labor, the weekly publication of the sixteen standard railroad labor unions, including the four Brotherhoods, shows convincingly:

> This is not a passing depression. It is the stormy dawn of a new age; and we must meet it with new methods. With our natural resources, trained skill and industrial plants, we need not wait for any other nation. We can lead the world back to prosperity instead of following it deeper into the abyss. It is high time for our political doctors to stop dawdling with opiates and palliatives for our economic ills, and root out the cause.

Labor speaks for the most formidable block of organized labor in the United States. There is more social intelligence in this group of workers than in any other in this country and normally they are not given to using strong words. Neither is this an eruption of editorial temper. The statement was well supported by the heads of seven leading railway unions in their joint address to President Hoover on May 13. Whatever happens in the labor movement in the next few years, this pronouncement of railroad labor will stand out as a landmark of aroused labor consciousness which transcends the traditional line of wage consciousness.

The railroad men repeatedly emphasize the fact that they are not Communists or Socialists, and at moments their theoretic outlook sounds like good, old populism, but the undertone is that of outraged self-respect and a compelling realization of the possession of power which it becomes increas-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ingly difficult not to use for their own good and that of the country:

> We have come here [they said] not to discuss theories nor to quibble over rights or wrongs, but we have come here to face a condition and to urge immediate action to deal with it. . . .
>
> Mr. President, because of the gravity of the chaos now impending, it is our duty to give the constitutional government of the United States full warning and to offer recommendations. . . . There is a growing demand that the entire business and social structure be changed because of the general dissatisfaction with the present system. We cannot longer ignore this situation. . . .

It is a certain sign of real events in the making when conservative labor leaders abandon their air of subserviency and address themselves to the powers that be in the language of equals and superiors —as when they smite the capitalist statesmen's inability to cope with the international situation, war debts, reparations:

> Why do we shout: "But a loan is a loan and a contract is a contract?" Why do we talk about having loaned in good faith and the sanctity of agreements to pay? Why should we continue frantically to demand that pound of flesh which is closest to the heart? Why should *we* demand the flesh closest to the heart of our brother laborers abroad when at the same time it means the ruination of our earning power, our economic system and the ruination of the American home? . . . The bond of fraternalism encircles the world and everywhere the workers have some things in common. If the problem had been in the hands of labor alone, we predict it long since would have been settled. . . . Does the national pride and honor require us to spend ten to forty dollars to collect one dollar? Does the national pride and honor require us to starve our wives and children? Does the national honor require all of America: laborers, farmers, white-collar workers, industrial and transportation organizations, to plunge headlong into greater suffering and disorder? No, it does not.

The language, with its implied power, belongs in the enviable tradition of the American railroad men and expresses the temper which gave form and substance to the historic fights of the railroaders of 1877-78, to the American Railway Union and the Pullman boycott under Debs in 1893-94, to the fight of the four Brotherhoods in Congress for the Adamson Eight Hour Law in 1916, and to the epic days of the Plumb Plan in 1919-21.

Again, from labor in Pennsylvania, all labor, miners, printers, building trades, comes self-criticism, unusual for its stark realism, frank talk and matter-of-fact reasoning. A report drafted by the Committee on Organization and unanimously adopted by the recent convention of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor hammers away these simple yet obvious truths.

> All hope for social reconstruction without violence, disorder or grave losses to society as a whole is based on the possibility of the development of a strong labor movement in this country.
>
> Even the blindest and most hopeful person must now realize that industry cannot stabilize itself unless some force outside itself brings this about. Surely no one is now so ignorant or innocent as to believe that we can pass vital social legislation needed to control industry, to curb the excesses of capital, to force industrial peace and disarmament between nations unless, within the next decade, we build up a bigger and more influential labor movement. . . . Political corruption, public apathy and social servility in all its forms, including disregard of civil rights and suppresson of free speech, will not be wiped out in Pennsylvania unless there arises in this state an organized movement which will *seriously menace* these forces which now dominate our political life. . . .
>
> We will never have a political movement of this character until we have a stronger economic movement; industrial organizations are and always must be the basis for political organization. *We cannot attract men or women to any movement which is so weak that it does not hold the respect of the masses and is not feared by the public at large.*

Labor in Pennsylvania, it seems, has not in vain lived through the depression years. But will these words lead to action?

For one thing, the stalwarts do not readily indulge in big words. They know that such words may go two ways. They may scare employers and politicians, or may not, but they rarely fail to arouse in the ranks of labor a new outlook which is as likely as not to challenge constituted leadership. If they speak up it is because they realize that things *have* come to an impasse and they feel that if they fail to lead in a crucial situation they are certain to be dragged on or to be thrown off. Only in the complacent offices of Mr. Green's A. F. of L., so it appears, is pride taken in the fact that despite the depression and accompanying disaster the workers have "all the while been putting their support behind national institutions and practical ideals," the latter presumably meaning "block-aid," handouts, sleeping quarters under bridges and no taxation of the rich, all the nice things Mr. Hoover so much admires.

Real workingmen do not seem to be happy over the fact that labor has been taking it on the chin and not fighting back. As against Mr. Hoover's boast in the Boston convention of the A. F. of L. in 1930: "for the first time in more than a century of these recurring depressions we have been practically free of bitter industrial conflict," The Railway Clerk, of the generally progressive but not boisterously radical Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Express and Station Employees, declares:

> The most hopeful sign of the times is that organized labor here and there is beginning to resist wage cuts. A nationwide wave of first-rate strikes would, we believe, be the best stimulant to business; because it would serve notice on employers that labor had demanded an end of wage cutting.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Hosiery Worker, speaking for the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hoisery Workers, which one year ago took wage cuts up to 55 percent in order to "stabilize the industry," is calling a spade a spade in an editorial, "Social War in America."

> A militant and radical labor movement is inevitable in the United States and probably a no less militant agricultural movement. War cannot be declared against a nation without that nation accepting the challenge.

An agricultural militancy seems to be no wild-eyed dream. John A. Simpson, president of the National Farmers' Union, in an address over a nationwide hook-up, spoke of "the 10,000 ultra-rich," the "cannibals that eat each other and who live on the labor of the workers," as the force that leads to revolution. And A. N. Young, president of the Farmers' Union of Wisconsin, testifying before a committee of the United States Senate, said that "there are more actual Reds among the farmers of Wisconsin than you could dream about—men who see red." He further explained his thought when Senator Thomas of Oklahoma wished to have, for the benefit of the record, an explanation of just what "seeing red" meant:

> They are just ready to do anything to get even with the situation. I almost hate to express it, but I honestly believe that if some of them could buy airplanes they would come down here to Washington to blow you fellows all up. . . . The farmer is naturally a conservative individual, but you cannot find a conservative farmer today. . . . I am as conservative as any man could be, but any economic system that has in its power to set me and my wife in the streets, at my age—what else can I see but red?

The signs of a *probable* labor awakening may be deceitful. But no longer is it *impossible*. There is a deep stirring in the ranks. The leaders willy-nilly give it expression. It would be unwarranted to presume that we are on the verge of an organized labor rebellion. But need it be organized? Above all, it is well to remember that the record of American labor, barring the last fifteen years, is one of energetic fighting. This record is second to none. The strikes of the tailors in New York in 1836, the anti-draft riots in New York and other cities in 1863, the armed battles of railroaders in Baltimore, Reading, Pittsburgh and other centers in 1877, the events in Chicago which led up to the Haymarket tragedy in 1886, the Homestead struggle in 1892, the struggles in Mingo County, West Virginia, in Herrin, Illinois, in Calumet, Michigan, and Trinidad, Colorado, in 1912 to 1915—all these are but instances of a militancy that is peculiarly American, the carriers of which were not "dis, dat and dere" men, either. American labor, its native cadres at that, has fought and undoubtedly will fight again if and when there is left no other "way out" in sight. And what other "way out" is there in sight in the present situation? Should American workers, not foreign born, middle-aged tailors or dressmakers in their teens, "get out of control," who will lay the law down to them?

The following lines from the late Robert Franklin Hoxie, one of the keenest students of American labor unionism, seem to be relevant:

> A large proportion of our organized workers are probably temperamentally conservative and would never become revolutionary unionists no matter what the industrial development. A growing proportion of the workers—largely as the result of our recent immigration—are temperamentally radical. In so far as they become unionists they are all bound to be revolutionists. Between these extremes are the floaters, the negative mass, perhaps the largest proportion of workers. They will be swayed by their associates and by industrial and political conditions. As skilled workers they are likely to be conservative, as unskilled, revolutionary. In times of prosperity they will become satisfied and temperate; in times of stress, radical. Political disability and casual work, such as the migratory worker suffers, will draw into the revolutionary camp. . . . Speaking, then, of revolutionary unionism as a whole, and not of syndicalism or the I. W. W., we shall see more rather than less of it.

Since Hoxie wrote this, seventeen years ago, many things have happened. On the one hand, living standards have been raised and labor has grown economically "immodest"; on the other hand, a growing technology has made jobs scarce and uncertain. The blind confidence in the captains of industry and the demigods of finance is largely a matter of the past; the thought of a planned economy has become familiar to many minds; the truth that power to do things need not be inherited but can be acquired or taken is no longer the exclusive possession of an ancient document called the Declaration of Independence: it has been gaining circulation in the street; the very word revolution no longer sounds so very foreign.

The present situation is not a *revolutionary* situation. It just is a miserable situation. But labor has seemingly become aware of this fact in a rather intelligent way, and this is of primary and revolutionary importance.

J. B. S. HARDMAN.

P. S. After the above was written, the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. declared in favor of compulsory unemployment insurance on a federal basis. The decision does not necessarily indicate that the A. F. of L. will throw itself energetically into the fight to realize the program or that it will abandon the archaic methods it heretofore used for the attainment of political ends. The action of the Executive Council does not presage independent political action, but tends to emphasize the need of it. However, the step taken by the A. F. of L. leadership fairly measures the pressure from the lower levels of the movement for new ways out of the crisis.—J. B. S. H.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Michelet

MICHELET'S "History of France" was popular with our grandfathers, but people seem rarely to read it today. It is a great book, nevertheless. I do not know whether any other country has anything comparable to it.

In a series of some thirty volumes, Michelet brought the history of France from Roman Gaul to Waterloo; and he found it necessary in order to explain what was going on in France to include so much of what was going on elsewhere that his work took on something of the character of a history of Europe. I do not know any other history which makes you feel that you have participated so intimately in so large a section of human experience. Michelet's power of evocation is amazing. He was the first modern historian to undertake to fill in the complete picture of the past, including science, art, literature, philosophy, architecture, costume and social habits along with politics, war, religion, economics and law; and he makes you feel that he has actually been back to the Middle Ages or the Renaissance or the Reformation and returned with reactions as vivid as if he were dealing with contemporary events.

His own life became merged with his history in a curious and dramatic fashion. Proust has hit it off exactly in his parody of Michelet: "This was always my force, my weakness also," he makes Michelet write. "This need of life. At the culminating point of the reign of Louis XIV, when absolutism seemed to have killed all liberty in France, for two long years—more than a century (1680-1789)—strange headaches made me think every day that I should have to interrupt my history. I only really recovered my forces with the Oath of the Tennis Court (June 20, 1789)." In the midst of the reign of Louis XI—the real history, not the parody—Michelet heaves a great sigh of oppression:

> The history of the fifteenth century is a long history [he writes], long are its years and long its hours. They were so for those who lived them; and they are so for him who has to begin them again and relive them. For the historian, I mean, who, not regarding history as a game, wants to participate in good faith in the life of the past. . . . Where *is* the life here? Who can say which are the living and which are the dead? In what party shall I take an interest? Among these different figures, is there one who is not dubious or false? One on whom the eye may rest to see clearly expressed in him the ideas, the principles, on which the heart of man lives? We have descended low indeed into indifference and moral death. And we must descend lower still.

And he exclaims in the preface to the last volume of his history he was to live to write: "Age presses me. And the decline of the century, too—so rapid for twenty years that it is as if it were falling headlong." We finally get to feel as if Michelet were the human spirit itself fighting its way through the ages—enduring long degradations, escaping into joyful rebirths, contending within itself in bewildered and cruel conflicts.

In these conflicts, as his remarks on the fifteenth century show, Michelet took sides. In this respect, he was not impartial. Not of course that there is really any such thing as impartiality in writing history—there must always be a point of view, and hence a bias, which may be more or less persuasively disguised. But Michelet's bias was not disguised at all. His family had been Protestants, and Michelet as a boy had known poverty and repression. His father had been a printer who had suffered from the censorship of the press under Napoleon's consulship. The boy had had to turn in and help his parents work the press, and after all the business failed. Michelet, still close to the Revolution—he was born in 1798—grew up with a strongly democratic and anti-clerical point of view.

And he had something more than a scholar's, he had a printer's, enthusiasm for the progress of human science and the freedom of the press. He was not only a man of the Revolution but a man of the Renaissance for whom printing was an adventure and a conquest: there was something in him still of the spirit of the great Renaissance printers such as the Etiennes, of whom he gives so stirring an account in his history—who not only set up the classics but edited and elucidated them, too. More perhaps than any other man of his time, Michelet seemed to represent the rights, the duties and the power of the printed word itself; and he is able to be so complete in himself, so much master of so large a domain, because, owing no allegiances of other kinds, he always looks at literature simply from this point of view of the responsibility of the printed word to the advancement of the human race.

On the one hand, great names in themselves made no impression on Michelet. "The most honorable [of historians]," he wrote, "have preserved their respect for certain things and certain men," whereas "on the contrary, the first duty of history, which is the judge of the world, is to lose respect for things." And again, apropos of Napoleon: "History will never accomplish anything unless it loses respect for things, unless it imitates Renaud de Montauban in the old poem when he had recourse to a burned stick to get the better of Charlemagne. Sacrilege and the mocking of false gods are the historian's first duty, his indispensable instru-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment for reëstablishing the truth." He was much given to seeing in individuals great symbols of tendencies and groups: he ran true to the romantic movement in this. But his great symbols were sometimes great stuffed shirts.

On the other hand, the common people play a far more important part in Michelet than in the work of most bourgeois historians. We remember the terrible description of the peasants, in his chapter on the peasant revolts in the Middle Ages, when we have forgotten Philippe-le-Bel and Philippe-de-Valois. "Today there are few chateaux left," he writes. "The decrees of Richelieu and the Revolution have seen to that. Yet when we travel even now under the walls of Taillebourg or Tancarville, when in the depths of the Ardennes, in the Montcornet Gorge, we catch sight above our heads of the oblique and squinting eye that watches us pass, our heart contracts and we feel something of the sufferings of those who wasted for so many centuries at the foot of those towers. To feel it we do not even need to have read the old histories. The souls of our fathers still pulse in us for pains that have been forgotten, almost as the wounded man suffers in the hand he no longer has." And he tells how in the "solitary galleries of the Archives, where I wandered twenty years," the nameless dead had whispered to him, the soldiers fallen in all the wars—asking him bitterly whether he had come there to write romances in the style of Walter Scott and demanding that he put in the record what had been left out by Froissart and Monstrelet, the hired chroniclers of the age of chivalry.

The French Revolution was for Michelet the glorious climax of his story. When he had finished the Middle Ages, he jumped his history forward to write about it in the excitement of the days that preceded the revolution of '48. His lectures at the Collège de France were later considered so inflammatory that he was dismissed from his chair. After the revolution had failed, Michelet refused to take the oath of allegiance to Louis Bonaparte and lost also his place at the Archives, among which he had spent so much of his life and which he had been the first to explore thoroughly and put in order.

He had lived through all those events which had disillusioned people like Taine and made them reactionary or cynical. The defeat of '71 had embittered the whole generation of the French writers who were young at that time. And it had shaken Michelet, too; but it did not stop him from going on with his history. He foresaw and hailed a new revolution. "I was born," he wrote in 1872, after the Commune, "in the midst of the great territorial revolution and I shall have lived to see the dawning of the great industrial revolution. Born under the terror of Baboeuf, I see before my death the terror of the International."

While the siege of Paris was in progress, the house Michelet lived in was burned. His own apartment, however, miraculously escaped—though the chair in which he worked was scorched by the flames. Then a powder magazine blew up in the Luxembourg and broke the windows to splinters. But Michelet, who was then in his seventies, simply took his notes elsewhere and went on writing his history. In spite of all contemporary discouragements, he did not take a short view of human experience, and what he was writing was something more than the story of an episode or period, discouraging as episodes and periods, when taken by themselves, might be. Anyone who had lived through the fifteenth century and the religious wars was not to be dismayed by apparent setbacks. Michelet's history had become more even than the story of the French: it was the story of something which could not be envisaged as a well rounded literary subject and which there could be no question of one's living to get to the end of.

Emmanuel Berl, the Marxist critic, has wondered how French literature would look if the present official account of it, dominated by the bourgeois point of view, were no longer to be accepted. What would be the changes in relative values? What first-rate writers, according to official standards, would quickly be deflated? What secondary writers, according to the same standards, would rise to first-rate importance? And what new aspects of the classics would be emphasized?

I wonder myself whether Michelet might not eclipse Renan and Taine who succeeded him and owed him so much. The bourgeois culture in France reached its maturity in the eighteenth-century enlightenment, and was at that time a revolutionary culture. After the Revolution, when the bourgeoisie were the dominant class, it ceased to be revolutionary. The bourgeoisie were now pretty comfortable —they could still fight on the old issues against a sovereign or the Church; but the necessity of protecting their interests against the working class was making them profoundly conservative. And their culture, at about the same time that it had reached its high point of technical perfection, began to show signs of decay. A Renan is subtler than a Michelet, and a Taine more academically solid; but neither has Michelet's vitality and exhilaration and scope. On one side, he was closer than they were to Voltaire and Rousseau; and on the other his early poverty had given him an uncommon insight into the social line-up of the future.

Is there a deprecative gesture in the criticism so often brought against Michelet that he is emotional, rhapsodical, romantic, unreliable because possessed by prejudices? The lyrical part of the "History of France" is small compared to the whole. The truth is that you get in Michelet an exceedingly happy combination of the romantic color and vision with the eighteenth-century dryness and shrewdness. Great areas of Michelet's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

history, when he is dealing with court intrigue or politics, are as caustic and prosaic as Stendhal. And there is nothing in it of the romantic lushness: the style is always terse, the rhetoric incisive wit. Reading Michelet recently again after ten years, he seems to me better than ever. What a marvelous chronicle of life! What a tremendous sustained performance!

At any rate, they have only just got round after nearly sixty years to moving him (with Renan and Quinet) into the Pantheon.

EDMUND WILSON.

In the fourth of this series of eight articles Mr. Wilson will discuss the career of Anatole France. —THE EDITORS.

The Farmers Go on Strike

I: *The Blockade of Sioux City*

ON A PAVED road in northwestern Iowa, a truck loaded with cream cans bowls along. Suddenly a log-chain stretched between two trees bars the road.

From the sides of the highway, where they have been lounging under the trees in the tall grass, a dozen tanned men, the leader waving a red flag, bar the road. There are pitchforks handy for puncturing tires, rocks for cracking wind shields, clubs to persuade the truck driver.

"Where you bound?"

"Sioux City."

"What you got?"

"Cream."

"Turn around and git outa here. Don't you know the Farmers' Holiday is on?"

Usually the truck backs up. Sometimes the driver takes a chance and tries to break through. A few of these chance-takers have finally retreated with broken windshields and punctured tires. The cream has been dumped in the road.

This is a picture of the most dramatic phase of the Farmers' Holiday—the attempt of a group of Middle Western farmers to enforce a strike designed to stop the movement of all farm products to market.

In a dozen counties in northwestern Iowa, and to a lesser degree in other counties, farmers are picketing the roads and stopping shipments. In several small towns produce buyers have agreed to shut up shop during the holiday. Elevators are considering refusing to buy grain until the holiday is over. Up in the Sioux City area special deputies have been sworn in and are riding a few trucks daily through the picket line.

In some cases truck drivers and farmers refuse to accept protection by deputies and stay home. "I've got to stay on living here," said one. "I guess I'll leave the truck in the shed for a while." Leaders of the strike, disclaiming any desire to use violence, insist that social ostracism of strike breakers will hold farmers in line. A farmer with hostile neighbors is helpless at threshing and at silo-filling time.

The strike is the culmination of a growing sense of injustice by corn-belt farmers. Specifically it is the response to years of exhortation by Milo Reno, veteran leader of the Iowa Farmers' Union, and his associates. For years, Reno has told farmers that eventually they would have to go on strike and starve city people into giving the farmer a square deal. The farmers that are supporting the holiday have backed the old McNary-Haugen bill, the more recent Frazier bill to refinance farm mortgages at a low rate of interest and other farm legislation of a so-called "radical" type. They have seen these bills beaten and have watched farm prices go down and down since the big crash in 1920. For them the depression has lasted, not three years, but twelve.

This year farms are being taken over by mortgage holders at an increasing rate. Renters are finding that this year's crops will not pay cash rent. Farm buying power is down to 50 percent of the pre-war average.

To many farmers, it seemed that the time for direct action had come. Early this spring the Iowa Farmers' Union, traditional leader of left-wing movements in farm affairs, began to discuss plans for a Farmers' Holiday during which all farmers would be pledged to refuse to sell any farm products. The agitation was continued, mainly in Iowa but also in several other Midwestern states, through the summer. Organizers carried pledge cards for farmers to sign. Finally the Iowa strike was called to start August 8.

In a manifesto adopted by farmers from Iowa, North and South Dakota, Illinois, Minnesota and Nebraska, at a meeting in Des Moines, August 15, the organizers of the movement said:

> Self-preservation is still the first law of nature and we agree to keep all of our products which can possibly be kept on the farms and hold same until the time shall have arrived when farm products shall bring a market price equal to the cost of production.
>
> We pledge ourselves to protect one another in the actual possession of our necessary homes, livestock and machinery as against all claimants.

What is "cost of production?" The Farmers'

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Union works it out this way: Allow the farmer 5 percent on his investment in real estate, 7 percent on investments in personal property and equipment and $100 a month for his own labor. To obtain this return, the union figures that on an average 160-acre Iowa farm with normal production, prices would have to be about as follows: ninety-two cents a bushel for corn, forty-nine cents a bushel for oats, $11.25 for hogs, thirty-five cents a dozen for eggs and sixty-two cents a pound for butter fat. On Monday, August 8, when the Farmers' Holiday was supposed to start, the farm prices on these products were: twenty-two cents for corn, eleven cents for oats, $3.85 for hogs, fifteen cents for eggs and eighteen cents for butter fat.

The call for the holiday directed farmers to stay off the market for thirty days or until prices reached "cost of production." Iowa was to start the ball rolling. Minnesota, Illinois and South Dakota were expected to come in the second or third week. North Dakota and Nebraska were also listed as prospects.

The first week of the strike in Iowa showed few results. Receipts of farm products at the different markets dropped off little if at all. In the second week, however, a new factor entered. The milk producers at Sioux City, who are getting only two cents a quart for whole milk, went on strike. These farmers began to hold up milk trucks and dump the milk.

The area around Sioux City has a good many Farmers' Union members and many more supporters of the Farmers' Holiday. These farmers seized the opportunity opened by the milk strike, joined the milk-strike pickets and began to stop, not only milk trucks, but trucks carrying any farm produce to town. The movement spread to an area including many of the counties in northwestern Iowa. Picketing, sometimes accompanied by mass action to turn back trucks, was common on many main highways. Even in northwestern Iowa, however, many towns were unaffected by the movement.

It is not entirely an accident that the area in which the Farmers' Holiday is strongest is roughly the same as the area of recent Bank Holidays. In this section lately, banks have adopted an extra-legal device to protect themselves against frightened depositors. They have persuaded the mayor in each town to declare a holiday, with all business houses closed, for a week or ten-day period. During this time, crews of business men have made the rounds of the depositors and obtained statements from them permitting the bank to retain the deposits for a period of some months, with the depositor not being allowed to check out any of his money except in specified small amounts.

The campaign to get these statements from depositors has been handled like the old Liberty Loan drives. Farmers reluctant to give up their deposits because they had been accumulated to meet interest or taxes, have been harassed by teams of solicitors until they signed. In cases where farmers have refused to sign, and banks have reopened, the banks have refused to let the non-signers have their money.

The Bank Holiday has furnished a fine argument for the backers of the Farmers' Holiday. They have used it vigorously. Even conservative farmers who take no part in the Farmers' Holiday movement seem pleased to see the bankers squirm when their own trick is turned against them.

Right now, in the third week of the Iowa strike, the usual guess is that the holiday will be confined to northwestern Iowa. The amount of produce going to market in that section is being cut down, but not enough to affect prices. If the balance of the state and other states join in, some real reduction in the flow of prduce to market might be obtained. Of course, even if this should happen, the resultant rise in the price of farm products would hardly help the holiday supporters. The better prices would go to the farmers who continue to sell their products. As soon as the holiday backers would throw their products on the market again, any scarcity-induced rise in prices would collapse and the holiday backers would get the resulting low prices. The backers of the holiday claim that once higher prices are obtained they will be maintained by a system of feeding farm products into the market gradually.

In the long run the pledge of these farmers to protect each other against foreclosure may turn out to be more important than the strike. Certainly, even if the holiday ends with no real results, the irritation of farm people against low prices will not cease. There will be another outbreak. It may logically take the form of neighborhood defense against foreclosures. Such a program would have considerably more backing than the present strike. Even now, conservative farmers who see no success in the holiday movement express considerable sympathy for the project or for any project aimed at raising farm prices and keeping farmers on their own farms.

Farmers have submitted with surprising meekness to a long period of deflation. Orthodox and conservative, they have followed the conventional methods of trying to obtain reform by petitioning Congress for action. Instead of getting help, they have seen Coolidge veto two McNary-Haugen bills, and have seen Hoover block farm bills at the last session. Meanwhile farm prices have slipped lower and lower; farmer after farmer has met foreclosure, and no serious attempt—or so it seems to farmers—has been made by those in power to improve conditions. After twelve years of this, it relieves a farmer's feelings a good deal to throw a rock through a windshield or to take any positive step, no matter how futile it may ultimately prove to be, that seems to lead toward better prices.

The Farmers' Holiday will probably fail in obtaining any substantial reduction of the flow of farm products to market; it will undoubtedly fail in an attempt to affect prices to any extent. It

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

remains, however, a significant symptom of the state of mind of a great conservative class which has borne depression for twelve years and which is finally ready to employ radical measures that seem to give it a chance to save itself from general bankruptcy. Unless farm prices go up this will not be the last outbreak in the corn belt.

Des Moines, Iowa. DONALD R. MURPHY.

II: *Home Thoughts from Afar*

I HAVE been reading what Mr. Murphy says about the farmers' strike in Iowa, and remembering things about that state. Sioux City is the town which has been the object of the farmers' embargo. It happens that I lived for seventeen years in a small farming community only a few miles away and I feel that I know the people of that part of the world rather better than I do those anywhere else.

Yet as I read, I can see that something astonishing must have happened to these Iowa farmers since I was last there, not long ago. These stories of men armed with pitchforks patrolling the roads which lead to town, intent on keeping farm produce away from the markets and thus raising the price—these tales in the daily press of farmers' committees who fire on trucks and let through only the vehicles with free milk for the babies—such things fill me with amazement. They sound like some far-off foreign country, not like the Iowa of big red barns and small white farm houses, where the wooded banks of the Des Moines are a meandering green interruption to black-soiled, fertile fields, among the richest in the whole world.

A year or so ago I went back to Iowa and attended a meeting of the grange, held in the basement of a church. The farmers and their wives and children had come in from miles around, driving not only Fords and Chevrolets but four- or five-year-old Studebakers and Buicks. They had brought basket suppers and made coffee in the church kitchen, which they drank in the good Iowa way, in big cups half full of cream. As they ate their cold fried chicken, cold apple pie and sugared doughnuts, they talked about Hard Times. They were troubled in their minds but not in a condition of panic; certainly far from being ready for such steps as the newspapers have recorded these past ten days.

They talked intelligently about the causes of their troubles and some possible remedies. They knew that Iowa farm land was still being held, much of it, at the inflated values of wartime; those with whom I conversed seemed to see through the economic absurdity of a tariff on agricultural products of which we export more than we import. They recognized the fact that they were competing on a world market with other countries where both living standards and land costs were far lower than their own; but they just didn't know what to do about it. Some of them even recognized that Iowa farming had never been much of a business in itself; that the largest profits had always been realized by those who bought cheap land, held it for the rise in the "unearned increment" and then sold out and went to live in Los Angeles. But the halcyon days when this was still possible ended, for the majority, with the depression of 1921; and those who still remained were trapped. The government kept trying to lend them more money (or talking about it); but what was the use of getting farther into debt when they couldn't pay what they already owed? The agricultural college at Ames (where nearly all their children went at least for a year or two) kept explaining how to get a larger yield per acre, but it didn't solve the riddle of what to do with the unsold surplus from last year's yield per acre. Everybody dinned into their ears "coöperative marketing"; but they might have pointed out, (though they didn't, being extremely courteous), that among those who must coöperate in marketing is a buyer; if he doesn't exist, no sale.

These patient, polite and undecided men represented the Iowa of my memory. All my life, I have been hearing threats from time to time that the farmers of the state would "go radical"; but it has never happened—never before. When times were hard, they used to talk vaguely about currency inflation or government-owned wheat elevators, but as soon as times got better (and they always did get better) such talk blew away on the breeze of confidence and Iowa voted solidly, conservatively Republican again. The Scandinavians of Minnesota might go into a third party; the Nonpartisan League might flame across the North Dakota horizon; but Iowa, drowsing among her prize hogs and tall corn, her prairie flowers and cottonwoods, Iowa stood firm.

No one, then, if he has not lived there, can imagine the mental wrench which it must have cost those Iowa farm men and women last week to take weapons and go out on the beautiful new cement roads to put the ring of steel around Sioux City and keep the foodstuffs out. If the editors of The New Republic barricaded themselves in West Twenty-first Street and began throwing tear-gas bombs at the Italian organ-grinder, they would feel no more shamefaced than these sons of Iowa soil must have felt. They are no victims of foreign agitators; they have been in America a long time—most of them for several generations; they are steeped in our traditions, acquired in little white schoolhouses which have now been swept away in favor of big "consolidation schools"; they read The Des Moines Register and The Chicago Tribune and are fond of Lincoln, who lived not so far away across the river. . . . I know, of course, that the farmers' strike is hopeless, doomed from the start; but it seems to me not without significance. When Iowa resorts to violence, it is time to take horse and gallop through the countryside, calling: "Flee to the hills; the dam is going out!"

BRUCE BLIVEN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That's His Story

THE SO-CALLED "Dink" Hubbell is a young man who toils and moils in the Woppington foundry, but he has not been doing so lately, through, as the phrase goes, no fault of his own. Accordingly on this August morning he dropped into Elmer Durkin's news shop for some cheap tobacco and self-improvement.

"Did you," Elmer asked, "listen in on that swell story from Washington last night?"

No, Mr. Hubbell had sought diversion at the Foto where a dame was almost pushed off a mountain but was saved by a handsome cowpuncher named Slim.

"This was a lot like that only it was an engineer. The yarn is here in the paper today and it's worth three cents of any man's jack. Take one home and curl up with it in the hammock. There's elegant reading matter for a summer afternoon and no strain on the intellect. I always say there is enough grief in real life without dragging it into acceptance speeches."

"Oh, that!" said Dink.

Ignoring this rude interruption, Elmer went on.

"I was razzing Editor Riland the other day about his hero and he said that Hoover had ability to burn but no imagination. I'll make J. T. swallow those words. Does this baby tickle a mean typewriter! Let me shoot you the scenario."

"It seems that there is a nice new President named Hoover, and what is practically the first thing that busts in his face but a panic. Well, sir, it turns out that they couldn't have picked a better President to hold a panic under because this lad is the champion heavyweight trouble-shooter of all our leading hemispheres. 'Herby on the spot,' I jokingly call him. Whenever this wonderman sees a calamity blowing in he calls a conference and stops it in its tracks. That's another thing he's a bear at. He's got a chestful of medals won in conference-calling contests.

"When business first does the swan dive he sends for the big bosses and tells them not to cut wages. That way the American standard of living stays on high. You'll love this story, Dink. He builds tariff walls to keep out cheap-skate foreign products because otherwise some of our mills would shut down and grain prices would sink. When things get worse he appoints eminent men to hope that nobody will suffer from hunger and cold.

"That's the way the story runs all through. What a man! The hero keeps the dollar up and taxes down, the home fires burning and the home tires turning. If it hadn't been for him, where would the dirt farmer be today? He gets the budget balanced a little and saves the banks from blowing up, or anyhow what banks there are left. He shovels out millions of government jack for public works and stops the Garnercrats from squandering the taxpayers' money for the same. Every time he cures one depression another bobs up, but he takes them all on alone or in bunches and knocks them for a gool. Once he has to quit saving his country for a few minutes and save Europe. Another thing he does is to make all the countries cut down their navies.

"A superman with a heart of gold—that's him all over. He can't send any groceries to the jobless man because that's against his constitution and by-laws, but he's always ready to slip the price of a mug of Java to a ragged bank or stake a down-and-out railroad to a bunk in a flophouse.

"As a result of his tireless work the situation is now about as lousy as it could be and it's a pipe we'll have to renew his license so he can finish the job. The next thing that's going to happen to us is the dawn of a better day. I wouldn't string you, Dink; he uses that celluloid language on the last page."

"If he's so hot," asked Mr. Hubbell, "how come things are still so bum?"

"Is my face red!" said Elmer. "Let's talk about prohibition. Maybe that won't be so hard. Well, the noble experiment is junked. Yes, sir, it goes to the storehouse along with the new economic era, the two-car garage and the one-chicken pot. It seems that prohibition causes violation of the law and disrespect for all laws. I bet Al Smith turned over in his political grave when he heard that one. H. H. passes the buck back to the states to do as they like as long as they don't like saloons or speakeasies. The federal government is to let go of the problem with one hand and take hold of it with the other. He makes everything so clear that the Drys can't dope whether he's John Barleycorn or Carrie Nation.

"Anyhow it was a lovely party and the speech got a good press. Some of Herbie's friends make a squawk about how Frank Roosevelt staged his Walker probe in Albany that day to grab some of the front-page space and cramp Hoover's style. Maybe he did but that crime story is not so hot as campaign fodder. All it's got F. D. so far is a pair of pink ears.

"No, the real opposish was pulled off by H. H. in person right there on the home grounds a couple of weeks before. Whatever mental midget told Herbert that it would make a hit with the customers to drive the B. E. F. boys out of town with tear bombs and bayonets pulled the prize boner of the term, and that's no faint praise. The alibi department has been trying to explain this off ever since but they can't seem to make a sweet bedtime story out of gassing down-and-out men, women and children."

"I saw it in the news-reels," said Dink, "and it sure looked tough."

"When the Chief told the unseen audience how his great, humanitarian heart swelled up and busted for the hungry and the homeless, I bet a million soreheads yelled, 'Oh, yeah?'"

FELIX RAY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Notes

The Campaign Begins—Jack the Target—Dishing the Dirt—The Negro Vote—Placating Al

TO AN UNPREJUDICED mind—if there is such a thing—it will be difficult not to become impressed with the trivial nature of much of the present campaign. Aside from Hoover's speech of acceptance and the Roosevelt-Walker-Seabury drama at Albany, the press and the air are even now filled with unimportant pronouncements on unimportant subjects by unimportant people. It seems to me that there has been no contest in a long time in which there has been so much loud gabble that means so little. The lack of anything remotely resembling unity of thought on either side is conspicuously apparent and if, by November, the great American people have any real conception of the so-called issues in this presidential campaign it will not be the fault of the managers, candidates or party spokesmen.

The general idea on both sides is not to debate about public questions but to "smear" the opposition. And if one is to judge by the present smearing operations and operatives, before the end of the contest the whole business will be conducted on a very low scale and in a very cheap manner. For example, I might refer to the recent outpourings of Mr. John N. Garner, the Democratic vice-presidential candidate, and the way they were answered by the Republicans. It is perhaps true that "Cactus Jack" made a more or less sickening exhibition of himself on his recent visit to the East—by his tough Texan slurs at the character of Hoover's mind, by his blatant references to Roosevelt as "my boss," by the "tears in his eyes" when he rejected the charge that he is a bigot, by his raucous assertions that "we are in now, boys," and his ridiculous declaration that "I have always voted for the best interests of the country except when two-thirds of my party has disagreed with me and then I have gone along."

All these things—and some others—undoubtedly rasped the politically fastidious. But as a matter of fact they were no cheaper than the taunting letters signed by various Republican party hacks and promptly given out for publication. Some of these asked Garner to explain why he put his party ahead of the country, why he thought he could be for the "best interests of the country" only when left to himself and whether he recalled that he had gone haywire during the last session of Congress. Before the "debate" on this momentous utterance ended, it sank right to the bottom—or at least it so appeared to me.

What I predict is that it will continue to remain there. The Republican management quite evidently has singled the ebullient Speaker out as the shining target. The more he is played up, it believes, the greater will be the drag on Roosevelt. Accordingly, it will eagerly follow his every campaign word for the purpose of pouncing upon it, thus painting for the people a picture of a giddy, loose-lipped, thoughtless fellow, recalling to the Eastern Democracy the distasteful names of Hearst and McAdoo, his twin sponsors and friends. It seems a rather dreadful thing that a contest in which there is so much vital interest should be allowed to take its color from a minor personality.

The whole Republican strategy can be briefly summed up. Tremendously encouraged by the beneficent effect of Hoover's speech—and there is no belittling the fact that the speech had that sort of effect—the Grand Old Party idea is that the thing to do is to stand pat on it, insist that the real issue in this fight is between "Order and Confusion," and do as little as possible outside of that—except to watch for mistakes on the other side and take advantage of them.

An idea of what I mean can be gathered from the "whispering campaign" concerning the Speaker which has already been started by his opponents. Always there are "whispering campaigns" on both sides, but in the main they mean little or nothing. This time the Republicans believe they have one under way that will be really effective. Before long, I think, it will lose its whispering character and become more or less an open feature of the fight in a certain section of the press and in certain large cities. At present, it is whispered mainly for the reason that the Republicans are preparing their literature and laying their lines. The basis of the business is that Mr. Garner comes from a state where "Jim Crow" laws have been in force and effect for many years, and where a white-primary election law, barring Negroes from participation, was enacted with the approval and support of Roosevelt's running mate, who is in complete sympathy with the traditional Southern attitude toward the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. In brief, it is alleged that he rejects the thought of social and political equality for Negroes and is in harmony with the Southern effort, which has been particularly effective in Texas, to take their votes away from them.

In a number of Northern states there are now a great many Democratic Negro voters. In New York, for example, Tammany has succeeded in enlisting a great many thousands of them in the organization. In Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Maryland, New Jersey and Connecticut—all pivotal and important states—the Negro vote is large. The great bulk of it is still Republican, but in recent years more and more have been induced to support Democratic local candidates and many have got away from the national ticket. The theory is that in the nomination of Mr. Garner, the Democrats have furnished the one way in which practically all these Negro votes who have strayed from the Republican fold can be recovered in a rush and without the expenditure of a nickel. It certainly sounds logical but it may not work out that way, and in any event it is a small and unworthy effort which reflects no credit upon the men or the party which sponsor it. There is no more excuse for raising the racial issue than there is for raising the religious issue, but when it comes to votes there is no length to which political management will not go.

Public interest, so far as regards the Garner visit to New York, was chiefly concentrated upon his call on that great sore and disgusted Democrat, Alfred Emanuel Smith. Quite obviously, the visit was not a success and Mr. Garner obtained no promise from Mr. Smith to speak for the ticket, though in the end the general belief is that he will do so. The best information as to the frame of mind

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Mr. Smith is that it is still very bad. He feels bitterly toward Mr. Garner for the refusal of that gentleman to talk to him on the long-distance telephone when he called him up just before California, led by the vindictive Mr. McAdoo, switched to Roosevelt in a caucus of the delegation.

Mr. Garner's call, with his hat in his hand, did not mollify Al in the least. Those closest to him say that Al did not during their conference refer to the telephone incident, did not lose his poise or control. On the contrary, he was dignified, polite, but exceedingly cold and noncommittal. The net result of the "conference" was exactly nothing.

One exceedingly intimate friend tells me that sooner or later Roosevelt himself will have to come "hat in hand" if he wants Smith's support, and that this is what Smith is waiting for. Further, it is said that when the Governor finally does come, it is Al's purpose to relieve his mind of all the things he has in it—that there will be some exceedingly plain speaking on his part. Perhaps this idea is right and Mr. Roosevelt, once the Walker case is out of the way and before he starts on his Western tour, will personally invite his former friend to come for a "chat." However, knowing Franklin Roosevelt pretty well, I have my doubts about that. He is, as he has himself said, pretty "pigheaded" at times, and he is not at all the type of man to go begging to an individual whom he does not consider himself indebted to or think he has treated badly. On the contrary, the Roosevelt feeling is that the debt is the other way round and that if anyone has been treated badly it is Roosevelt by Smith, not Smith by Roosevelt. There is about these Roosevelts a stubborn pride that prevents them from scraping the forehead upon the floor in front of a man who says it has to be done—at least, it is stubborn enough to prevent the scraping being done publicly in full view of the people.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Deep South Notes

V: Ars Longa

SO FAR as I can make out you can take your choice between two main conceptions of the name Barataria. One is that dear island town that the lively duchess gave to Sancho Panza, as its governor, and that came to represent in his mind a form of penance or dire retribution for his wicked days. A less chivalrous meaning is cousin to the word "barratry" in English, the Old French form *barat,* barter; and barratry is any form of mutiny, embezzlement or misbehavior by the master or sailors of a ship that does injury to the owner. However that may be, the country of Barataria runs south from the banks of the Mississippi down some seventy miles, almost, to the Gulf; and my friend and I have arrived at last, after many turnings, diverse bayous, marshes, a network of tall reeds and grasses, numberless still waterways, lagoons filled with the bright summer sky, and now and then against the skyline one of the shapes, like dunes, that they call *chênières,* piles of shells on which trees have grown.

We have come to within sound of the sea waves. There are palm trees now, live oaks, oranges that send a sweetness into the air, and tamarisks with their violet flowers and light plumy leaves, finer than spray but certain and hardy as salt. We have come indeed to Grande Isle and are standing leaning against the gate of one of the ancient smuggler's cottages, almost hidden among its trees, the old palings of the fence deep in the lush grass and the owner, with his features like a Portuguese sailor and his direct, passionate, half-sullen eyes, is talking to us most courteously. He is telling us of the country hereabouts, how moody and sudden and golden it can be, and as he talks I can almost think he is drawing a portrait of his own slants and habits of life.

It is strange, he says, though he and his father and his father's father are long used to it, God knows, how this country sweeps from one thing to another. You will have the breeze coming in, fragrant with the south, the sun shining everywhere, the water blue and green as glass; and then all of a sudden it is dead calm, not a sound, the heat stifling—for one lives by the sea breeze, Monsieur, he says. You wait for something; and then it comes. A gale that shakes and bends the trees, twisting the whole country under the darkened sky, the spray comes in, and a sheet of rain is like a curtain, you may say, with a sound like rifles on the leaves, the roofs, the wooden shutters. The storm is past, suddenly as it rose, and the sun comes out, everything looks like brass and silver, the water is running off, the breeze starts again. It was like this always, when Lafitte the pirate's house was here, not so far away either, a hundred years ago and more, Monsieur, the man says, and even before that, for his people were on Grande Isle and some of them, his mother's people, over on Grande Terre, long before the Lafitte brothers ever saw the place.

At the mention of Lafitte, I and my friend look at each other and smile. So that is what we are thinking of, Mr. Lyle Saxon's book, which not long ago we sat reading aloud, in New Orleans, there in Jackson Square, once the Place D'Armes, on the bench shaded by the pomegranate and hibiscus, reading so late that the twilight settled about us and the policeman of the block tired of looking through the iron railing at us as he passed on his rounds, and came inside and sat down on the railing's base, talking with a nurse-maid; we could hear her going off into French now and then very prettily while he listened; with his beaked face, he was like a buccaneer himself! "Lafitte the Pirate," Mr. Saxon's enchanting and beautiful book, done with such irony and sly romance! I know now that this is what this country of Grande Isle means to me as I stand here. I am not seeing it through my eyes but through the book.

I laugh to myself to think how art is long after all and life short, and of that epigram alighting among the Victorians, though somewhere it must have been a platitude for centuries, which said that life followed art not art life. I remember all of a sudden how once some years ago, when I was staying at a friend's ranch in South Texas and we were out one night sitting with the cowboys around their fire, where they gathered after riding the cattle range all day and were singing, I found myself lost between that moment and the passage in Strabo in which he tells—though he has it really out of Artemidorus—of the Troglodyte shepherds. A nomadic people, their country over

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

opposite Arabia Felix. Strabo tells first of their wandering life and the strange animals among them, that mixed progeny of the wolf and the dog, for example, that would howl all night, and the deadly serpents. Then he tells of burying the dead under a mound of stones, "on which then they put a ram's horn and go away"; and of the fights among the men, beginning with their fists and ending up with knives unless there were women near to run into their midst and ply them with entreaties; and of how they traveled by night, putting a bell on the male cattle to keep the wild beasts off, and lit fires for this same purpose when they camped, and sat "during the night, singing a kind of song near the fire." *Ars longa*—I feel the breeze from the sea, with the salt in it, I hear the banana leaves like great wings, but know that I am given by a work of art the life I experience at this moment and that the rest of the day is only a note on Mr. Saxon's book.

Barataria, he tells us early in his history, was flourishing here, secretly, with smugglers and fishermen and fugitives from this justice or that, long before Pierre and Jean laid eyes on it. Then they came and made their establishment here, with the slave warehouse, the warehouse for their sea plunder—which ran sometimes toward a million dollars in value before it was carried to the city to be sold—with their pirates and privateers, outcasts, criminals and adventurous men of so many bloods, French, Spanish, West Indians, Americans, Portuguese, Negroes, Maltese and Catalans; there were finally a thousand men with them. It was from here that Jean Lafitte made his social excursions, to country balls where, under his courtly manner and fine looks, he arranged matters for the sale of contraband slaves and goods or carried off with him some young man fascinated with the pirate or with the glamorous life of pillage, romance, gold, debauch and danger. To women Jean was indifferent, that was Pierre's province if you like; Jean did the thinking, they said, for them both. At the grand ball given to the victorious General Jackson, Lafitte was present. Mr. Saxon gives an account of the dazzle and wiles of him among the ladies. To one of them he would explain his hatred of the Spanish: for fifteen years he has carried on war against the Spanish on the seas solely because he cannot forget the day when, having wound up his affairs in the West Indies, bought a ship and loaded her with spices, he had set sail for Europe with his wife (she was young, rich and beautiful) a Spanish man-of-war attacked them—the end of that story is that his beloved wife died of fever and exposure, his hate is undying. To some of the ladies he said he was a bachelor, to some a widower, to some that he hated England, to some Spain; at any rate there was no truth in the stories told against him, he was not a pirate but a privateer; though later that evening when Jackson's brother-in-law, Brigadier General Coffee, was introduced by Governor Claiborne to Lafitte and hesitated, trying to reconcile the name with the elegant gentleman before him, Lafitte, furious at the fancied insult, advanced a step and said, "Lafitte, the pirate!"

Mr. Saxon gives another delightful account, a microcosm, seemingly innocent, of the sarcasm of nature and history, the incredibility of human fortune sometimes as the adventurer launches his bold chance against the gods. Before the triumphal entrance into New Orleans and the ball for the conquering general, there had been a movement against the pirate. In November of 1813 Governor Claiborne had caused a proclamation to be posted in which he offered a reward of five hundred dollars to any person delivering the said Jean Lafitte to the sheriff of the parish of New Orleans; and two days later another offer was posted, a reward of fifteen hundred dollars for the arrest of William Charles Cole Claiborne and his safe delivery at Grande Isle, signed Jean Lafitte. The citizens had seen Jean reading the proclamation against himself, smiling as he read, and walking later among the promenaders in the Place D'Armes and the soldiers in their red and blue uniforms with plumes. The Creoles of New Orleans had laughed that someone could treat the Yankee Governor like that. Later, however, Lafitte had offered his services against the British, after refusing a large bribe of $30,000 from them, the pirates had become patriots, Lafitte's company first among the saviors of the city, and the President of the United States had pardoned all, fully and eloquently.

The chapter on General Humbert's birthday dinner is remarkable enough; but the best of all is that last chapter in Lafitte's chronicle. The evidence seems to be fair that he died in Yucatan, in 1826, and was buried in the Campo Santo of Silan, but that is not wholly known to be true. We read how Lafitte, now forty years old, was settled at Galveston, tremendously prosperous again, wily, splendid. He had even managed a governor's commission out of Long, the General of the Army of Texas, the republic newly arisen to the west. But depredations on the high seas continued, Spanish and American complaints poured in; and at last early in 1821, the United States government sent a brig-of-war, the "Enterprize", politely requesting Lafitte to abandon the island. He was given two months to effect his departure. Finally the night came when Lafitte burned Galveston. Mr. Saxon's closing account then grows perfect. Sailors aboard the "Enterprize" saw the settlement burst into flames, the wooden town grow into a flaring torch. As the shadows receded the whole harbor was visible. The pirate's fleet was gone. Beyond the harbor the sailors saw three vessels. No signal, no farewell. Out of the firelight, into a dark sea. . . .

Out of life, into dim legend.

STARK YOUNG.

Childless

Call to the swan and bid him bring
A blessing from his plumy thigh
For one that tires of whispering
To heaven, as I.

Let that fierce eye and urgent breast
Disparage all my tumbled shape
Beneath the imperious webs opprest:
From throat to nape

Slide the long neck and hissing head
Harry my bosom in his bill,
Awaking all that now is dead
To do his will.

L. A. G. STRONG.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Music in Russia Today

THE Song of the Volga Boatmen," which, in the popular mind, has been associated with the spirit pervading Russian music, is the direct antithesis of the new proletarian music of Soviet Russia. Though formerly much of the Russian folk music was filled with a sense of inevitable suffering, oppression, despair and hopelessness, the music of present-day Russia epitomizes the spirit of reconstruction, the will to live and do, the vitality of collective labor and the struggles and aims of the preletariat.

While a vast quantity of popular music completely expressive of the spirit of the new social order has sprung into existence since the revolution of 1917, the work of composers in large forms, under the influence of this new spirit, is still in its infancy. But they are striving toward a definite union of the proletarian spirit with the higher forms of music, realizing that most of their efforts, so far, have been experimental.

The generally conceded exception to this experimental and transitional stage is the work of Davedenko, whose opera "1919" is the most significant musical work of Soviet Russia in large form, and seems to express the proletarian spirit more completely than any previous piece of music. The première of a scene from the opera was performed under the auspices of the Society of Proletarian Musicians last November, in the High School of Music (formerly the Conservatory of Moscow). The general impression created by the performance, and by the detailed analysis and discussion which followed it, was that it had inaugurated a new musical epoch in Soviet Russia. The scene chosen from "1919" was entitled, "Starting the Car," inspired by what is known in Soviet Russia as "Saturday." The significance of the term "Saturday" is peculiar to Communistic Russia. It is based on the fact that a certain day was designated by Lenin when workers were to contribute services to the state voluntarily and without pay. In Davedenko's opera the service rendered by the workers is to place a derailed freight car back on the tracks.

There is no attempt at poetry in the libretto; the words are completely naturalistic. The opera begins with one or two men shouting to their comrades, including a number of girls, to come and help them. As they are joined by larger and larger groups of workers and the work gets under way, the cries of individuals are merged in the mass singing of the large crowd which has gathered.

The music is magnificently cumulative in effect and the final starting of the car is expressed in a climax of great power and intensity in which the physical energy, glory in labor and excitement of completing the job are expressed by both singers and orchestra. Melodically, the score has been influenced by peasant songs. The musical idiom is modern in vein, coherent in form, the influence being derived from the proletarian spirit and not traceable to any direct musical source. It was felt by one auditor, at least, that the final resolution of the magnificent dissonances was a mistake which should be eliminated by the composer before the work is presented to the general public. Davedenko's early works dealt with songs of the civil war, but in this composition, for the first time, he reflects the spirit of social construction.

The character of the audience on this occasion was of particular significance. It comprised critics, musicians, faculty members of the High School of Music, proletarian composers, representatives of the press, students and workers. The chorus was made up of singers from the workers' schools and the orchestral score was played from the piano arrangement. This first performance was presented without scenery, it being the main purpose simply to provide a hearing of the work and a discussion of its merits by a critical audience. This discussion was open to all present.

Another recent composition for full orchestra and people's chorus, with words by the proletarian poet Besymensky and music by Shostakovitch, is "October." It commemorates the Revolution of 1917 and the words express so admirably the spirit of the revolting masses that I believe they are worth quoting in full. The literal translation reads:

We went, asking for work and for bread,
Our hearts were oppressed with anguish.
The chimneys of the factories pointed toward the sky, like tired hands without strength to make a fist.
Louder than the cannon, the silence was broken by the words of our grief and our pain.
O Lenin! The desire of calloused hands:
We have understood, Lenin, we have understood that our lot is a struggle! Struggle! Struggle.
You led us to the last fight. Struggle!
You gave us the victory of labor.
And no one shall take away from us this victory over ignorance and oppression.
No one! No one! Never! Never!
Let everyone be young and brave in the struggle, because the name of our victory is October!
October! October!
October is a messenger from the sun.
October is the will of the revolting centuries!
October! It is a labor, it is a joy and a song.
October! It is good fortune for the fields and machines!
Here is the banner name of the young generation and Lenin!

The music of "October" teems with vitality and power.

The Soviet state is doing everything in its power to foster and develop understanding and appreciation of the new music as well as the music of other periods through state musical publications, which include The Proletarian Musician, a monthly issued by the Association of Proletarian Musicians, For Proletarian Music, issued every ten days, and a newspaper, largely devoted to music, entitled Soviet Art, which is issued every four days. These publications have a wide circulation throughout Russia.

Among their contributors are the distinguished music critics Beljaev and Tchemodanov, the latter being the author of a "History of Music in Connection with the History of Social Life," which is an attempt to use Marxian principles in musical criticism. In articles on music, only language which is easily comprehended by all readers is used. If technical expressions are used, explanations of their meaning are made in brackets. The enormous increase in the demand for publications on music since the Revolution attests to the growing interest in the art in Soviet Russia. Musical criticism is written from a non-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

technical standpoint and endeavors to show how contemporary music helps to organize the masses, while music of the past is analyzed on the basis of the social aspects of the works and the relation of the composers and their output to the epochs which produced them.

The Soviet government publishes extensively the new music of the masses, which is prepared by the Proletarian Society of Musicians, under the guidance of such thoroughly trained young proletarian composers as Davedenko and Bialy. These popular songs are issued in pamphlets of single-sheet form, at prices ranging from one-half to one cent a copy, and also in arrangements for the workers' choral groups, which are such an important factor in the new social organization. In addition there are many works in symphonic form, operas and ballets, published, but proletarian composers are especially encouraged to compose popular songs reflecting the struggles, aspirations and life of the people, and also to create new works for combinations of such native musical instruments as the balalaika.

As a special inducement to Soviet composers, the government, through the musical branch of the publication society, commissions composers to write—indicating the general subject, which must be applicable in spirit to the lines of action and ideals of the people. A fixed sum is offered, 25 percent of which is paid in advance. If the work, upon being presented, is considered worthy, an additional 40 percent is paid upon acceptance, and the balance upon publication. The work may be rejected, but the composer retains the initial 25-percent payment. This advance permits the composer to devote his entire time to creation, without dissipating his energies in an attempt to earn his daily bread while doing creative work. Whether or not his completed work ever sees the light of day in either performance or publication, he has performed a service for the state and is deemed worthy of his hire.

ASHLEY PETTIS.

Not on the Ticker Tape

THE RECENT violence of fluctuations in security markets indicates plainly that the panic-time assumption that the public had learned its lesson about the dangers of speculation is fallacious. Human nature may be expected to operate in the financial markets as in the past. It's considered smart to be able to profit without the sweat and groan of actual work, and for Americans the stock ticker has a special lure. The hazard of building up an inflated stock-market position has been amply demonstrated. Instead of relying on the assimilation of tenets of caution by the public, it would be socially wise to fabricate more effective brakes on runaway markets. Although it may not be feasible to stop a fool from parting with his money, it should be practicable to prevent him from turning the nation's economic system topsy-turvy.

One sober minded captain of industry, thinking along these lines, privately suggested that the banking law be amended to prevent banks from lending on securities at fantastic prices resulting from manipulation. He would insist that bank loans be limited to 80 percent of *book value*, as stated by corporate directors. This would substitute the judgment of responsible corporate officials for the fantastic appraisals of market speculators. The next step in reform would be to insist, as Professor William Z. Ripley of Harvard has proposed, on uniform and honest corporate accounting methods, so that the outsider could know that the book value bears a definite relationship to actual worth.

Another proposal for minimizing the tendency to victimize outsiders, would be to induce the New York Clearing House banks, prior to the passage of the foregoing amendment to the banking law, to publish weekly the amounts they are willing to lend on listed securities. In times of inflation, these banks refused to accept market prices, and placed their own more conservative valuation on securities. To discourage the building up of dangerous pyramids, the Stock Exchange could require that additional margins must be in cash, rather than in paper profits on previous holdings. This at least would induce realizing of profits as the balloon was being blown up. It is also desirable to limit the loose money-lending practices of stock brokers.

The Stock Exchange should put through a rule insisting that no new marginal customer be admitted to the books of member firms until he has had a personal interview or at least an individual letter from a partner in the firm. The customer should be informed that marginal purchases entail risks which outright purchases do not involve. The broker should make clear that in effect the marginal buyer is making a demand loan, subject to call at any time, for the entire difference between the purchase price of securities and the amount of margin, or part payment, which the customer puts up.

Unless brokers determine whether customers have resources for meeting additional margin calls, when and if made, then they tend to confirm the charge of critics that the Stock Exchange inevitably feeds on crops of suckers.

At this stage of the cycle, loans against securities are extremely low, but the recent samples of reviving disposition toward speculative whoopee indicate that the long-term problem of reform is still with us.

The address delivered by H. I. Harriman, new president of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, two days after President Hoover officially accepted the nomination, contained vastly more economic liberalism than the Chief Executive's speech. And it is a safe generalization that a politician who is less liberal than a head of the Chamber of Commerce is not liberal at all. In fact, this year comparatively little is being said about the great engineer's liberalism.

An important industrialist, who is a large employer of labor, told me that he favors a minimum-wage law in the United States to protect socially minded employers, who desire to keep up wage standards, from ruinous competition with labor swatters. He pointed out that the steel companies gained nothing from wage slashes, since each company followed the leader and began to compete on a lower scale. This employer said that private interests should not be allowed to set living standards, which are an essentially public matter.

The Democrats in Wall Street—and there are a substantial minority of them—are getting much mirth from swapping this story among themselves: Out in the Corn

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Belt hitch-hikers no longer ask for a ride, but, like sandwich men, bear placards in front of them and behind them reading: "If you don't give us a ride, we'll vote for Hoover."

In the five months that he has been back at the helm of the Bank of America in California, A. P. Giannini, who ousted the Wall Street crowd, has reversed the tide of receding deposits, and has brought in millions of new deposits. Yet when he came back, routine bankers on the West Coast were questioning his orthodoxy as a banker. His success in spite of the doubts recalls a remark of Sid Farrar, the ball player and father of Geraldine Farrar. When Geraldine first entered the opera, someone told him that his daughter occasionally sang off key. He replied: "I don't know anything about that; all I know is that she gets very well paid for it."

When the ticker slowed up, brokers amused themselves with this yarn: a Salvation Army lassie was shaking her tambourine outside the Hudson Terminal Building, saying: "Won't you give a little for God?"

"Good Lord!" a commuter asked. "Is He broke too?"

Materialism is so rampant in the United States, apparently, that an attempt is being made to win the election on the stock ticker. The rise in certain agricultural products may be described as the result of an organized sellers' strike, but it is to be questioned whether an organized group can win in the face of huge carry-overs and excessive surpluses.

On August 26, Mr. Hoover, with no thought of self-help in November, will seek at the new White House business conference to get a Buy Now movement going among wholesalers and dealers.

L. M. N.

CORRESPONDENCE

Education and Indoctrination

SIR: When I heard Dr. Counts' address, "Education—for What?" at the Progressive Education meeting in New York, I was consoled by its cool reception. There was an element of danger in the appeal, but so long as it received no response, it was harmless. I felt less sanguine when I saw the same address featured so generously in the columns of The New Republic.

I began to see the danger of liberal people generally, and progressive-education people in particular, projecting their sense of guilt, born of their own inadequacy and frustration in the midst of chaos, onto the schools. What if all these should fall under the spell of Dr. Counts' indictment of progressive education, that it is not genuinely progressive, since "it does not come to grips with life in all its stark reality," since it does not "wage war on behalf of principle or ideal," since "it does not face squarely and courageously every social issue"? What if, under the *mea culpa* spell, they should forget, as Dr. Counts apparently meant them to forget, that the word *progressive* in progressive education never carried political or sociological implications or obligations; that it is descriptive only of educational techniques which *progress* in keeping with psychological and other relevant findings; that schools, progressive or otherwise, do not *initiate* "wars on behalf of principle or ideal," neither here nor in Russia; that public schools here teach capitalism and turn out good citizens (?) for a capitalistic regime, just as public schools in Russia teach communism and turn out good citizens (?) for a communistic regime; that progressive schools teach neither capitalism nor communism primarily—they teach the child; that the teaching of children is based upon principles of psychology, education, hygiene, and not upon political changes?

The chief danger in Dr. Counts' recent appeal to the educational world lies in its own planlessness and in the confusion which it stirs up in the minds of those whom such appeals always reach, between a mature adult's social responsibility as a citizen of the world and his responsibility as an educator to the child who is entrusted to him; in the possibility of obscuring the goal of progressive education and weakening faith in it: that if the child were permitted to live through fully each developmental level, at its own tempo, the end-result would be an integrated adult, relatively freed from egocentric cravings, ready to cope with social problems. There is no reason yet to give up this goal and this faith. The psychological principle upon which they are based has not been in operation long enough to prove itself true or false. To abandon it now, in response to the social restlessness of harassed adults, would be a random act, a regression in the quality of educational thought and an irreparable interruption of an important educational experiment.

East Gloucester, Mass. AUGUSTA ALPERT.

SIR: Miss Alpert's statement represents extremely well the conception of education which I attacked in my article and which in my judgment is utterly untenable, namely, that education is essentially a question of method, that education can ever be divorced from politics, that child nature in some mysterious way provides adequate guidance for the educative process, and that "an integrated adult, relatively freed from egocentric cravings" as the "end-result" of education is in any sense self-evident. Moreover, every candid and informed person must admit that such an "end-result" on any large scale is quite impossible under the present organization of society, whatever may be the "psychological and other relevant findings." Miss Alpert's fault is a common one: she wishes nature to authenticate her own prejudices. It is well to have prejudices in abundance, but their parentage should not be disclaimed.

New York City. GEORGE S. COUNTS.

SIR: Dr. Counts's articles, "Education—For What?" [The New Republic, May 18, 25,] suggest that America has come on a time when school criticism will not be confined to teachers' magazines and when facile writing about education will have increasing potentialities for harm. . . . The majority of the more intelligent teachers put into effect that forward step in education represented by progressive theory. But John Dewey and his progenitors in education have been at work in the United States for a hundred years. The progressive theory, today's expression of their thought and effort, has to a considerable extent permeated the schools from kindergarten to college. In reasonably complete form, however, what is known as progressive education is actually practised in experimental schools conducted under the wing of a university; in a few public elementary schools; and in the elementary grades of the fringe of private schools supported by our upper financial group for reasons rather of prestige than of understanding or of sympathy.

To expect of the majority of parents in a business culture a more intelligent and altruistic attitude is entirely irrational. Their interest is not in educational theory, but in material success for their children. Teachers, then, find in public feeling little support for any real advance in education. Their prestige, never too great for their work, has since the beginning of the century declined sharply from a variety of causes—the rise of mass education with the consequent reduced importance of the individual

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

teacher; the rise of large incomes with the consequent lower status of those with small incomes; the overwhelming feminization of the profession with its concomitants of timidity and subservience to repressive community restrictions on personal and professional behavior; the fact that so large a proportion of them are immature, transient and of little cultural background. A group of such low prestige cannot ensure the progress of any movement, nor can it at present get enough power to protect either its own members or children. For teachers in the United States have neglected organization, the preliminary to the acquisition of power. Only they, along with social workers and physicians, have a professional interest in the next generation. If in the future they could rise above their deep-seated sense of inferiority, it might well be that they could, in spite of their disabilities, learn to use power better than most other American groups.

When the newer critic of education takes the field, his equipment will include first, a personal philosophy; second, a social philosophy; third, a sense of growth and time in the educational process; fourth, a comprehensive knowledge of the situation of American schools and teachers, the social fabric into which the schools are woven and the ideology of the teachers. Only such an equipment will save him from thinking in terms of a day, a region, an age group, a class, an educational cult, a set of outworn educational clichés, or the jargon of the current intellectual. In addition he will have to know how to reach the public ear, a task which may demand more than he has of acumen and persistence.

For the moment he may consider himself successful if he helps teachers to take the great step forward out of inferiority and to envisage a struggle for power with ends more important socially than their usual goal of self-preservation. To gloss over their real situation is not help but hindrance.

Bethel, Conn. EVA RORTY BEARD.

Private and Public Morals

SIR: In the editorial "Behind the Walker Case," [June 22, 1932] you wrote:

> One of the profound facts about modern American life and in particular life in great cities, is the indifference of the mass of the population to corruption. This was seen forcibly at the time of the oil scandals of the Harding administration, when Republican newspapers throughout the country treated the whole matter from a strictly partisan standpoint, and Republican politicians, *personally honest,* deliberately obstructed the ends of justice.

The italics, Sir, are mine. What do you mean, personally honest? Obviously when you wrote "personally honest" you were unconsciously falling into that mental attitude which you were consciously criticizing: you were yourself assuming that double standard of ethics in politics that makes most political behavior, and ours in particular, so insane.

For if a Republican politician can deliberately obstruct the ends of justice and still be personally honest, then what is personal honesty?

No, Sir. When a Republican politician cheats at cards, he is personally dishonest and when he deliberately obstructs the ends of justice, he is, if anything, even more personally dishonest. And the harder and faster you can hammer that simple notion into the minds of our Republican and Democratic politicians and public, the less stinking will the smell of our political life be.

Vienna, Austria. FRANCES GUNTHER.

Back to the Land

SIR: My time is up and I must bid good-by to The New Republic. I haven't the price. I can do nicely without the polite wrist-slappings of Hound and Horn esthetes and their little enemies. There is now a larger "leisure class" whose problems seem more vital. But I am especially loath to part with The New Republic after the eminently sensible editorial reply to Bolton Hall, who is for a wholesale back-to-the-landing of the unemployed.

My husband and I were among the first catch of suckers landed by Uncle Sam's irrigated-land agents under the Carey Act. So out of a high, wide and not-so-handsome experience, I can tell the uninformed world that farming requires brains and skill, along with backbone, insides and a generally stalwart anatomical set-up. Not to mention capital and equipment, as for any other business enterprise. Also farming sense. Unless you work *with* earth and elements, they sit back and snicker at your puny efforts —and you fail dismally. Only true children of Antæus understand the soil and thrive on it. The arid high country resents man's insolence in taming it with irrigation, and one day will revert to the wild. In places this change back to nature is already taking place and the desert again blooms with the cactus instead of the rose.

Farmers now are not hoarding money in milk cans. We have no money. But if, by thrift, frugality and good management, we have kept out of debt, we have our land (and taxes), also shelter of sorts, though few "modern improvements," potential food on the hoof and in field, orchard and garden. And we have the privilege of wearing our old clothes and driving our old cars (if any), bossing ourselves and thinking our own thoughts. But alas, we have oh-so-little leisure.

Yours for a modicum of common sense among leaders and populace.

Cody, Wyo. ALTA BOOTH DUNN.

P. S. A Chicago woman with finishing-school education, but otherwise reasonably intelligent, was astonished when I told her that cows gave milk primarily to nourish their own young. She had not known that a cow was ever "dry"! A. B. D.

For the Centralia Prisoners

SIR: The Centralia Publicity Committee, Box 37, Centralia, Washington, is in desperate need of funds to continue its efforts for the release of the five men who have already served thirteen years of undeserved imprisonment. The only salary paid by the committee is the twelve dollars a week on which the devoted secretary, C. S. Smith, manages to subsist. The death of Elmer Smith, the young lawyer who literally gave his life to get these men free, was a great loss. Cannot enough of us pledge ourselves to send the committee one dollar a month so that his work in their behalf shall not have been in vain?

FREDERICK A. BLOSSOM.

Long Island City, N. Y.

Setting Them Right

SIR: In The New Republic of June 8, 1932, appeared a report of the success which fifty thousand unemployed are having in Seattle with the operation of shoe, clothing and other factories, mines, business enterprises and farming without the use of money. This organization is making one very serious mistake. It should own all of the real estate concerned. Its power to produce is sufficient security whereby it could issue non-interest-bearing notes, and use these in the payment of the real estate. At present it is at the mercy of the real-estate owners.

I would hate to see the boys lose out again. I would like to see them set right first and then go ahead. If they own their own real estate they will have security and certainty of a permanent success. What do you think, boys, am I right? Is there anything I can do to help you? I have no money, but I have an idea on how things ought to be done.

H. BERNARD WHITE.

New York City.

For a Biography of the de Reszkes

SIR: I am collecting material for a biography of Jean and Edouard de Reszke, and should appreciate any information which your readers could give me. All material sent me will be most respectfully treated and will be returned promptly. Address, 26 Grove Street, New York City.

New York City. CLARA M. LEISER.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

April Hopes

The Coming of a New Party, by Paul H. Douglas. New York: Whittlesey House. 236 pages. $2.

SEVENTY-FIVE years ago John Stuart Mill, writing the textbook of liberalism in his tract "On Liberty," laid it down as "a commonplace that a party of order or stability and a party of progress or reform are both necessary elements of a healthy state of political life; until the one or the other shall have so enlarged its mental grasp as to be a party equally of order and of progress, knowing and distinguishing what is fit to be preserved from what ought to be swept away." Among many disillusionments with liberalism in the United States, one of the chief is that this condition of political health is no longer fulfilled. We have, indeed, two major parties, but by no stretch of imagination could either be described as a party of progress. Both represent that degradation of politics in which the preoccupation of party is not with principles but with power, with the retention or the acquisition of office, an effort in which alliance with the strongest force in the community is the obvious strategy. As that force today is business, and as the theory of business depends on individual profit, we have the paradoxical situation of both popular parties swearing allegiance to an economy in which public welfare is at best a by-product of the prosperity of an endowed and privileged class. It is no exaggeration today to say that the two parties are alike in alliance with wealth against commonwealth. Instead of excluding the Socialist party from the ballot, as Judge Thomas Taylor recently did in Chicago, on grounds of public policy, an honest judge might more properly exclude the Republican and Democratic parties as conspirators for public plunder.

This situation is the background of Professor Douglas's earnest and able plea for a new party as a means by which the people may take over their government for their own use and advantage. That the state is an organ of general welfare and the highest form of coöperation among individuals for their common good, rather than an instrument for protecting vested interests, is the author's fundamental thesis. The first division of his book details an extraordinarily clear and concise statement of the failure of political government as now administered to meet the proper demands of industrial workers, farmers and citizens generally, and the devices by which it is turned into an instrument of oppression against them. The consolidation of business and the concentration of power in a few hands has given government a clearly recognizable overlord, with definable responsibility for the present evil case of the country, but without any promise that such a crisis can be averted in future. Professor Douglas looks askance at the salvation offered by the advocates of a planned national economy and asks the question which has occurred to others: Where is the power to compel private business to make concessions in the interest of a common policy, or where under a profit system is the incentive to such sacrifice? He concludes tersely: "It seems, therefore, that a truly planned economy is almost impossible under capitalism and only practical under socialism." The common welfare has no bribe to offer either partisan machine, and neither will ever become its vehicle.

The most provocative and exciting part of Professor Douglas's book is Part II, in which he discusses the arguments of those who urge the possibilities of reforming the old parties, or capturing one of them, or otherwise boring from within the present political structures. In these chapters he gives a rapid and vivacious account of the course of political experiment in this country since the Civil War, and a corrosive survey of the present state of the two major parties. He adds a significant chapter on problems of tactics in connection with the organization of a new party, pointing out how the several fates of the Populist, Progressive and Farmer-Labor parties are warnings against attempting to build a new party from the top. The only sure foundation for such a party is local, with local organization and local leadership, directed to local needs. In the city of Chicago are some 11,000 precinctmen, representing the Democratic and two factions of the Republican party, paid for political work directly or indirectly from public sources, and marshaling voters in battalions according to orders from Cermak, Deneen or Thompson. Until the energy and devotion of self-selected citizens with the public good at heart can duplicate this organization, until the votes of masses of their fellows can be won to sustain them, the old bi-partisan, interlocking political directorate will continue to hold American democracy up to the contempt of the world.

Professor Douglas is optimistic. He believes that the historical appeal, sentimental and traditional, of the old parties to the voters has been greatly weakened; that in particular the Democratic amalgam of the foreign-born proletariat in the North and the feudal oligarchy in the South must soon break down; that the enthusiasm of men and women enlisting in a national cause representing disinterestedness, good will and general welfare will overcome the political inertia in elections and carry the trenches of private greed in our courts, perhaps by the grand assault of a constitutional convention. As Professor Dewey says in his foreword: "The spirit, the ardor, the hope, which permeate the book make it an inspiration as well as an educative force." And assuredly never did faith in our political institutions so much need rekindling as now. Never before in this country has government fallen to so low a place in popular estimation, or been so universally an object of cynical contempt. Never before has the chief magistrate given his name so liberally to latrines and offal dumps, or had his face banished from the screen to avoid the hoots and jeers of children.

If the political process of democracy is to regain respect, indeed is to survive at all, its component parties must return to the functions prescribed by Mill. There is the chance that it will not survive, that as in the case of slavery and the Civil War the cancer has grown too deep and become too malignant to yield to physic, and demands the knife. As Professor Douglas admits in his epilogue:

> It may be that the mighty who now rule both business and politics will, like the kings and emperors before them, oppose the peaceful and democratic movement of the masses with such concentrated fury that they will precipitate a civil and class war. If that happens, then the democratic processes advocated in this book will of course go by the board, and the whole struggle will be fought out on quite a different plane and with different methods.

Even for those, however, who no longer believe in the political process, Professor Douglas's book has a meaning and value. No appeal to revolutionary methods can succeed unless the people are convinced that every means within the constitutional framework has been given a fair trial and failed. No one can maintain that the people of the United States, whose welfare and lives are today ruthlessly sacrificed, have taken politics seriously since the Civil War.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The farmers have fatuously followed the Republican tradition; the workers, distributors, investors and reformers have trimmed back and forth between the two parties for their own ends. The great uprising of the Progressive Movement of 1912 was shamefully sold out by its leadership. Not once has there been a thoroughly earnest, honest neck-or-nothing resort to constitutional methods through a new political alignment. The time is ripe for this attempt; only if it fails will it be pertinent to inquire whether the depressed classes (including most of us) will respond to revolutionary leadership.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Better Homes Tomorrow?

Reports of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership. Vol I: Planning for Residential Districts; 227 pages. Vol. II: Home Finance and Taxation; 278 pages. Vol. III: Slums, Large Scale Housing and Decentralization; 245 pages. Washington: President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership. $1.15 each.

WHETHER one calls the President's housing conference a success or a failure depends on what one assumes its purpose to have been. Five hundred men and women from all parts of the country and most walks of life were brought together in twenty-five fact-finding and six correlating committees and made responsible for producing thirty-one reports, which were read last December to three thousand other men and women, also from all over the country and divers walks of life. If one assumes that a clear-cut policy and prompt action were expected to emerge, the futility of such a set-up would draw tears from a stone. But if the purpose of the conference was broadly educational, one must grant it a considerable measure of success. The experience was very educating to the committee members and more or less so to the larger group. The final version of the committee reports in the volumes before us and those which are to follow will continue the educational process. Some of these reports will be valuable for reference. A few will help to create public opinion. The worst will ultimately become historic curiosities.

Volume I contains the reports of four committees: City Planning and Zoning, Subdivision Layout, Utilities for Houses, and Landscape Planning and Planting. The book is a useful summary of present-day accepted theory and practice in the fields covered.

Volume II contains two reports, Home Finance and Taxation. Home Finance ought to have been the keystone of the whole arch. It was instead, to many of us, the most profoundly disillusioning feature of the conference. Mr. Hoover, in his call, had said two things: "It should be possible in our country for anybody of sound character and industrious habits to provide himself with adequate housing," and, "The finance of home building, especially for second mortgages, is the most backward segment of our whole credit system." That seemed to put it up to the Committee on Finance to find some modern substitute for our backward home-financing system which would enable every American of industrious habits to provide himself with adequate housing. The committee included the presidents of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and the United States Building and Loan League and other leaders in the mortgage-lending world, as well as the president of the National Association of Real Estate Boards. This imposing group offered no plan for lower interest rates, larger first mortgages, longer period of amortization or anything else which would enlarge the boundaries of the class able to afford home ownership or to rent adequate shelter. They avoided naming any system of financing except their own. If they ever heard of the Belgian or New Zealand methods of fostering home ownership among the working classes, or the Dutch system of loans to limited-dividend and coöperative housing societies, they made no sign. The California experience in promoting home ownership among veterans would have fared no better if four West Coast realtors, asked for suggestions, had not replied, "Copy Veterans' Welfare Board Plan," thereby gaining it one line in Appendix I.

The laboring mountain brought forth such advice to the home purchaser as to have an equity of at least 25 percent and to avoid short-term mortgages. Community and large-scale housing operations are disposed of in the final paragraph as follows: "The financing of such projects presents a problem extending beyond the activities of the regular home-financing institutions"—which certainly helps a lot.

Mr. Hoover appears to have found this report disappointing. The unofficial story goes that a friend of his suggested reviving the Calder Home Loan Bank Bill of 1921, and that the two of them sat down and whipped it into shape. The proposal follows the report of the Finance Committee in this volume, but does not form part of it. I do not share the view of some of my liberal friends that the Home Loan Bank will do no good. It will help home purchasers burdened with short-term mortgages to get them renewed, and it will increase the volume of money available for first-mortgage loans.

Volume III goes far to restore one's faith in human nature. In it are found the reports of the Committees on Blighted Areas and Slums, Large Scale Operations, Business and Housing, and Industrial Decentralization and Housing. Lack of space confines us to the first two, of which Abram Garfield and Alfred K. Stern were chairmen. These dynamic reports inspired Secretary Wilbur to write in his foreword: "To those who look upon government operations in the field of housing construction with abhorrence, the challenge is definitely offered by the Committees on Large Scale Operations and Blighted Areas and Slums. If business, financial and industrial groups fail to take the task in hand and apply the large sums of capital required and the utmost of planning genius and engineering skill to the problem . . . housing by public authority is inevitable." Now that—as an administration utterance—is going some.

The Garfield committee says that blighted areas and slums exist in practically all American cities. The elimination of slums is a public purpose for which municipalities may reasonably exercise the right of eminent domain. The available resources of private enterprise will need to be supplemented by government aid. The Stern committee states that no new dwellings are being built within reach of two-thirds of the population, and that "the houses of the country constitute our largest mass of obsolete and discredited equipment." The economies incident to large-scale operation and limited dividends would make it possible to build for at least another tenth of the population. "More necessary than all other requirements is a plentiful supply of money at low interest rates." They saw the potential role of large-scale housing operations in the present economic crisis and suggested that Congress should include loans for such projects in its prospective legislation for the relief of unemployment. Credit should be given this committee for what has since taken place in this direction.

EDITH ELMER WOOD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ellen Glasgow's South

The Sheltered Life, by Ellen Glasgow. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

A FEW SOUTHERN novelists—T. S. Stribling, Fiswoode Tarleton, Fielding Burke—try to treat their native soil realistically. But those who command the greatest technical resources, such as Mr. Cabell, Miss Roberts and Julia Peterkin, fly to cloudcuckoolands of fantasy and introspection, or substitute for the tragic problem of an enslaved race a set of Negroes who move unconvincingly between the two worlds of quaintness and melodrama. Among these Southern novelists, the position of Ellen Glasgow is not perhaps so easy to define. Her books, particularly those produced during the last six or seven years, show an intelligent if not a powerful grasp of certain historical Southern realities. She has traced with wit and first-hand intimacy the decay of the land-owning post-Civil War aristocracy and has exposed with a kind of suave mercilessness its intellectual poverty, its blindness, its feeble romanticism. As Southern novelists go, I suppose we should call her a realist.

Yet one should recollect that, like most of her peers, she leaves untouched that South which is important to us today. She laments with elegance and restraint, the harsh breath of an intrusive industrialism; but a natural allegiance to her own class (some of whose fetishes she is, as an insider, privileged to mock) blinds her to the obvious fact that the machine and the plantation are merely two forms of exploitation. To the bloody struggle which in the last thirty years has transformed the Southern laboring class into a race of peons she is of course anesthetic. Nor is there any indication that she is aware of the salient feature of Southern social and economic life—the continuation of black chattel slavery under the disguise of the industrial hire-and-fire system. It would be silly to ask of Miss Glasgow that she be conscious of these things; but it is surely of some importance, as she is considered a major American novelist, to define the limits of her interests.

Ellen Glasgow, employing wit, finesse and even a certain objectivity, reworks again and again a Southern past as dead as the political reputation of Andrew Mellon. Her latest book satirizes, with a mildness and a sympathy which its tragic finale cannot disguise, the genteel traditions of her own caste. The action takes place during the ten years before the War, the period in which the moral and economic degeneration of the old Southern upper-middle class proceeded most rapidly. With one aspect of this decay "The Sheltered Life" concerns itself—the emotional pretense (particularly in regard to sex), the false pride, the sentimental optimism which are the natural expressions of a defeated aristocracy. The point of the tale lies in the frustrated life of Eva Birdsong, a Southern belle of the Lily Langtry variety (combining both the physical and mental perfections of a really high-grade wax figure). To admire the qualities of Eva Birdsong is the main occupation of most of the other characters in the book. But they are a façade; behind them the real Eva suffers in silence for twenty years while her handsome husband gives protracted lessons in the Virginia tradition to a Negro washerwoman. The pretense is finally too much for Eva. She discovers Mr. Birdsong engaged in a final and inexcusable gallantry; goes completely out of her mind (making the shortest trip on record); and shoots him dead. So much for "The Sheltered Life."

It seems to me that stories such as these, no matter how expertly written (and it should be said that "The Sheltered Life" is far inferior stylistically to "They Stooped to Folly") can have at best only the value of historical novels. It is impossible to relate such a book to the modern consciousness, unless one is over fifty and interested in sentimentally reliving the emotional idiocies of the world of one's youth. There is nothing here—not a character, not a scene, not a situation, not a conflict—which retains freshness or vitality for us today. As exhumation "The Sheltered Life" takes a respectable place; more it would be hard to claim for it. All of which is not astonishing when one remembers Miss Glasgow's remark, made last October at the University of Virginia conference of Southern writers. Uttered in all honesty and sincerity, it illuminates her outlook and sets clear bounds to what may be expected of her by any reader fully alive to his own time. She said, "I find my sympathy shifting to that outcast from the machine civilization, the well bred person."

CLIFTON FADIMAN.

Cutting the Pattern

The Costume of the Theatre, by Theodore Komisarjevsky. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 178 pages, $5.

IN ENGLISH there is not much significant writing about theatre costumes, and a book by a man of Mr. Theodore Komisarjevsky's reputation ought to count. Mr. Komisarjevsky was once a director of the great Kamerny Theatre at Moscow; he is credited with having introduced the Russian theatre to Paris; he directed some of the Theatre Guild's most notable productions and is at present a leading director in London. In this book we see him on one of the chief theatre problems; and we see that problem struggling as of old to find its theorist.

After a cursory survey of the function of costume in civilization generally, Mr. Komisarjevsky turns to costume in the theatre. From here on his scheme is more or less chronological. We have chapters on Greek and Roman stage costume that might be fair enough, with regard to the relation between the costume and the theatre of the period, if they were not blocked up with technical details, pins, brooches, dyes, patterns and such information, easily found in reference books. The discussion of miracle plays and moralities is mostly given over to anecdotes with but a mild bearing on costume. The Elizabethan chapter groans with quotations, largely those diatribes, long since familiar, on the vicious extravagances of the dress of the time, not of the time's theatre. To the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Mr. Komisarjevsky brings a point of view that is far more inclusive. We see how royal patrons extended their cultural influence through the theatre in general, even down to most refined details of costume; and are thus reminded of the extent to which a definite culture can bear directly at every point on the whole body of an art. Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is sandwiched the *commedia dell' arte,* one of the great theatre forms. The costumes of the *commedia* characters have already been described more completely by M. Ducharte in "La Comédie Italienne"; what Mr. Komisarjevsky could have done was to develop the influence that this theatre had upon the costume of ensuing years, an important subject.

As for the nineteenth century, if we are to believe Mr. Komisarjevsky, it was concerned only with the reform of stage costume; and twentieth-century costume is very much a matter of his own tastes and prejudices, and sometimes

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of his limited information. He cites, for example, as a case of lack of appreciation and taste on the part of modern theatrical managers, the various productions of "Salome," saying that none of them showed any appreciation of the fact that Wilde wrote an "ultra modern fantasy," and that "Beardsley quite rightly interpreted it by his modern illustrations." What—for a single instance—of Nazimova's "Salome" picture, with its costumes frankly credited to the Beardsley drawings?

In German, we have a complete discussion of costume in Oskar Fischel's and Max von Boehn's "Die Mode." In English, Mr. Komisarjevsky only leaves us where we were. There was room for a book that would consider costume as drama, as one of the means by which we give the play its nearness or remoteness from the real, as one of the idioms of style; this book is still to be written. In spite of the lavishness and expense of the costuming in our American theatre, the question of costume—like that of make-up—remains, esthetically, one of our sharpest unsolved problems.

LOUIS M. SIMON.

War and Democracy

After the Deluge: A Study of Communal Psychology, by Leonard Woolf. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 362 pages. $3.50.

ACCORDING to Mr. Woolf, historians have failed in trying to explain the Great War. They have studied the diplomatic acts which immediately led up to it, or the unstable political equilibrium of Europe which might at any moment have led to an almost spontaneous outbreak of hostilities (it is known that in the view of some historians, Europe "stumbled" into war), or the economic configuration of Europe, and the rivalries and ambitions of its ruling classes, which predisposed their minds, as well as the minds of the masses dominated by them, to the idea of war. But, Mr. Woolf points out, the statesmen called on men to fight for freedom, nationality, democracy, and the men believed them. Even Bethmann Hollweg spoke of "a defensive war for right and freedom." Hence, concludes Mr. Woolf, it is these ideas that are the real explanation. But these ideas correspond almost exactly to those for which men fought in the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Hence, in order to understand the War, it is necessary to trace these ideas to their beginnings, and to analyze them thoroughly in order to discover their full meaning and content. Whereupon Mr. Woolf proceeds to a study of the democratic ideas, which comes to an abrupt stop *in medias res* at the conclusion of the book.

The point of view, methods and results of this volume —the first in a projected series—do not lead us to expect scientific marvels from the volumes that may follow. The belief that the propaganda which accompanied the War was its real and adequate cause, is so naïve as to require no refutation. And Mr. Woolf carries this credulous naïveté into what he is pleased to regard as a historical study of the ideas of democracy. He takes the professions of men, their proclamations and political platforms, at their face value. Not once does it occur to him to test men's professions by their acts in order to discover the real meaning of their words. He dwells at great length on the Rights of Man of the French Revolution, on the "inalienable rights" of the American Declaration of Independence. He analyzes them in every possible way in order to arrive at their real meaning and implications. The method is precisely the same as that of the theologians, who analyzed the ideas of God, soul, free will, etc., in order to arrive at the true essence of those verities.

If Mr. Woolf had not disdained the vulgar methods of the scientific historians, he would have found that the very same French revolutionaries who proclaimed the Rights of Man divided the French people into two classes, the "active" and the "passive" citizens, of whom only the former had the right of suffrage, while all men who worked for hire were expressly excluded from it. He would also have found that the right of association was denied by them to workingmen. Similarly he would have found that the American "inalienable rights" found their practical expression in the Constitution of the United States, which aimed at and succeeded in limiting and defeating the democracy of America. Indeed, Mr. Woolf himself quotes from a speech at the Philadelphia Convention in 1787, in which Madison opposed the direct election of Senators, because he feared the non-possessing democracy, the majority of the future. That quotation should have put Mr. Woolf on his guard against general professions which might be interpreted to mean many things, according to the predilections and interests of the interpreter. But in that case Mr. Woolf would have felt himself compelled to give up his new and improved historical method, which in reality is ancient and moldy, and to revert to the methods of the pragmatic historians.

HERMAN SIMPSON.

Book Notes

BIOGRAPHY

THE LIFE OF MENDEL, by Hugo Iltis. *Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 336 pages, illustrated. $5.*

The first comprehensive and scholarly biography in English of the founder of genetics comes to us by way of a translation from the German of Hugo Iltis' "Life," written in 1924. Having access to much valuable family material, and with a competent scientific background, Herr Iltis has presented a well rounded if by no means brilliant picture of Johann Gregor Mendel, the Silesian peasant's son who became the prelate of a wealthy Augustinian monastery in Brünn (now Brno in Czechoslovakia), and one of the high priests of modern science. His early hardships and poverty, his struggles to obtain an education, his successes as a teacher and his failures in certain absurd academic examinations; the tranquil years in the Königinkloster where, as a monk, he worked and lived for his "children"—the garden peas from whose revelations "mendelism" was to develop—all this is told in a straighforward manner that does much to show us the man and his strong but unassuming personality. We learn also of Mendel's skill as a meteorologist (he was one of the first to suspect the weather implications of sunspots), his keen mathematical ability and fondness for chess; his extraordinarily clear conception of scientific method and—a very significant detail—his inflexible refusal to permit his sincere religious faith to affect either the direction or the implications of his researches. The portions of the volume devoted to these researches, to Mendel's forerunners and contemporaries, to the misunderstanding and neglect he so quietly accepted, and to the final — posthumous — recognition of his life work, make inspiring reading for those whose interest in science is also an interest in the drama of intellectual courage and achievement.

ECONOMICS

BUSINESS AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST, by Benjamin A. Javits. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 304 pages. $2.50.*

Benjamin A. Javits, a New York attorney and "pioneer in the field of industrial planning," presents, as have many others, a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"plan" for meeting the challenge confronting the existing economic order. Unlike the majority of those writing on this topic, he assumes that the reorientation of our business life must come through the voluntary action of the capitalistic body, and he demonstrates, with considerable acumen, just how this can be accomplished under the regulatory laws of the country such as the Sherman Anti-Trust law and the Clayton Act. Though more provocative books on our present dilemma have appeared, Mr. Javits' competent work is an excellent contribution to the current discussion and offers capital ballast to the argumentation of the Swope Plan.

ANALYZING OUR INDUSTRIES, by Cecil Eaton Fraser and Georges F. Doriot. *New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company. 468 pages. $5.*

What is the use of writing a valuable book like this for business executives and investors when the authors admit, guardedly of course, that speculation may be a more important factor in business than good judgment and that the problems of industry are likely to be solved by the liquidation of incompetent management rather than of labor, "which has a much less influence on the success of at least many of our companies"? Perhaps the volume was circuitously intended for the economist, professional, amateur and occasional. It no doubt grows out of the realization in recent years that the operations of the American industrial system can be better understood by studying the economics of specific industries than by indulging in apologetic vacuous theorizing. The research staff of the Graduate School of Business Administration at Harvard University has been gathering data along the new lines for several years, and now a former and a present member of the faculty sum up the results. Sick industries like textiles and coal, well enough industries like iron and steel, paranoiac industries like aviation, are diagnosed according to their corporate, technological, managerial and merchandising aspects. The information is intimate, the interpretation enlightening and the forecasting reasonable. If anything, the book is too contemporary, leaving it weak in historical background.

World Politics

FOUNDATION OF LENINISM, by Joseph Stalin. *New York: International Publishers. 128 pages. $1.50.*

This little book confirms the general impression that the present actual, though informal, head of the Soviet government possesses neither the massive intellectual power of Lenin nor the brilliant originality of Trotzky. His mind is rather slow and confined; consecutive thought is not its natural function, but a painful process; energetic assertion and reassertion take its place. The immediate impressions that come from action are more natural to it than ratiocination; hence the directness, the immediacy, of the chapter on strategy and tactics, which is absent from the rest of the book, and which is derived from immediate experience in the revolution and the civil war. Yet the book has considerable value as a brief exposition of Communist policy, in Russia and the world at large.

COUP D'ETAT: The Technique of Revolution, by Curzio Malaparte. *Translated by Sylvia Saunders. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 251 pages. $2.50.*

Signor Malaparte's formula for a technological insurrection in a modern state was discussed by Matthew Josephson in The New Republic of April 13. The first complete and successful application of the new technique was made by Trotzky in the October Days of 1917. Malaparte asserts that Stalin was equally successful in applying the appropriate counter-tactics against a similar coup by Trotzky in 1927. More than a third of the book is devoted to a description of these events; the rest consists of shrewd though sketchy accounts of other post-War Catilines and Ciceros, and concludes with an appraisal of Hitler's strategy. Hitler is an eloquent opportunist whom the author regards as a caricature of Mussolini. He has apparently not only failed to grasp the lesson of 1917, but now wastes precious time and energy in irrelevant agitation and electioneering when, if he had the intelligence and will to be a modern tactician without constitutional inhibitions, he could easily seize the state. . . . Miss Saunders' translation is adequate.

Fiction

THE JOURNEY INWARD, by Kurt Heuser. *Translated by Willa and Edwin Muir. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.*

Kurt Heuser's Africa has an unfortunate tendency to turn into a Continent of the Soul without warning, and his novel occasionally becomes a parable the meaning of which is not quite clear. But at its best this story of a young surveyor's experiences in a company-owned land is an exciting narrative. The history of the company, the intrigues, the struggles with the Negroes, the fights for power, are written in the way historical novelists of the past described the conflicts between states. The analysis of the Negro mind is detailed and convincing; the Negro characters are in fact more understandable than the Europeans. The translation is excellent.

MASQUERADE, by Jo Van Ammers-Küller. *Translated by Charlotte Bodde. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.*

The setting of "Masquerade" is the Holland of a few decades ago, where bourgeois family tradition demanded female submission and modesty, and dictated that a daughter remain sheltered under Mama's wing until a suitor acceptable to the parents was found to marry her. The author deals chiefly with Tina who, having a mind of her own, refuses to be exhibited for marrying purposes or cheerfully to accept Mama's wing. Her high spirits, however, are out of proportion to her experience; she no sooner falls in love than she repulses her lover in a moment of fright. Next in line comes an intellectual suitor, a former school teacher of hers, who reminds her of Goethe. In the end she finds refuge in marriage with someone she doesn't love, and in her children. Although adolescence is evidently the author's chief concern, "Masquerade" is mainly successful as a vivid and enlightening portrait of Dutch middle-class life.

A Correction

The last sentence of Edmund Wilson's article on Casanova in the issue of August 17 was misprinted. It should read as follows: "Casanova, ignoring his many humiliations, was still trying to crash the gate; whereas Rousseau had been hammering with his the lever of the Revolution." As the sentence was printed the definite article before "lever" had been omitted.— The Editors.

Contributors

J. B. S. Hardman, editor of The Advance, official organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, plans to issue in September a bi-monthly, Timely Papers, which will be a magazine of social and economic criticism.

Donald R. Murphy is managing editor of Wallace's Farmer and The Iowa Homestead and has for many years been in close touch with the growing unrest in the Corn Belt.

L. A. G. Strong is an English poet and novelist, his most recent book being "Brothers."

Ashley Pettis, the first American pianist to use an American program in a transcontinental tour, was formerly a member of the Eastman School of Music at Rochester, New York.

Edith Elmer Wood is a lecturer on housing at Teachers' College, Columbia University, and the author of "The Housing of the Unskilled Wage Earner," "Housing Progress in Western Europe," Recent Trends in American Housing" and other works. She was a member of two of the correlating committees at the President's Conference on Housing.

Clifton Fadiman, who has contributed criticism to many of the literary journals, is editor of Simon and Schuster. He is at present working on a book tentatively entitled "American Life and American Novelists."

Louis M. Simon, who worked for two years with the Theatre Guild, was technical director for the League of Composers' production of "Oedipus Rex" and "Pas d'Acier."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW YORK WIGMAN SCHOOL . . . OF THE DANCE

Under Mary Wigman's personal supervision . . . Courses for dancers, amateurs and teachers at the only official American school to teach the Wigman method of the modern dance . . . **Hanya Holm** chief instructor.

Fall term starts Oct. 3rd . . . Enroll Sept. 26th to Oct. 1st . . . Daily classes during August & September.

113 WEST 57th Street, (Steinway Building)
New York City

PICKERING COLLEGE—NEWMARKET, ONTARIO, CANADA

A residential school for boys located 25 miles from Toronto, in heart of rural Ontario. Offers academic instruction of high standard. Boys prepared for Canadian and American Universities and business. Departments of Creative and Manual Arts, and Vocational Guidance, allowing for development of individual interests and capacities. Founded by Society of Friends, and adapted to modern conditions. Liberal in outlook, modern in equipment. Enrolment limited to 125. Fees $650.00—$700.00 (Canadian). School reopens September 15th. For detailed information regarding Courses, methods and details of scholarships and bursaries, write The Headmaster, Joseph McCulley, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada.

Order your books—all books—mailed anywhere in the U. S. A.

POSTAGE FREE

from

THE NEW REPUBLIC BOOKSTORE
419 West 21st Street New York City

RED OAKS

Atlantic Highlands **New Jersey**

A 150 acre country estate one hour from New York, with private lake for swimming and boating. Tennis. Old Gardens. Famous Cuisine. Beautifully appointed rooms. Intellectual and congenial group. Splendid vacation for those wanting to finish a piece of work.
Open all year. Reasonable rates.

Management—Mascha and Hyman Strunsky
Phone Atlantic Highlands 264

Top off the summer at

Delaware Cliff Camps

in the Kittatinies, Flatbrookville, N. J.

Modern children's camp available to adults for Labor Day week-end. 800 acre estate—river beach—tennis—horses—hand ball—excellent cuisine. Three or three and a half day week-end (Friday morning until Tuesday morning) for $12. **For reservations write or phone Bushkill 9019R2.**

Re ST CUPERATION CREATION

at THE CRYSTAL VILLA

Woodcliff Lake, N. J.

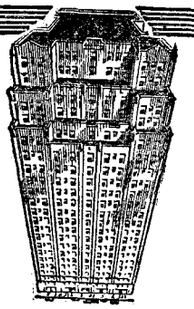
38 miles from N. Y. Fare 90c. Week ends—$1.00 return. Combines country pleasures with city conveniences. Ideal for convalescents. Cater to diets. Bracing walks. Bathing on premises. Wholesome Jewish-American table. Refinement. Congeniality. Rates considerably reduced. Phone Park Ridge 404.

WHAT'S A VACATION *Without Books?*

Not only for the rainy days but for that hour when you're relaxing after a day's sport—your bookseller will keep you supplied by mail.

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

Transient Rates $1.50 per day up, with bath $2 up



$8 to $14 WEEKLY

KENMORE HALL

145 East 23rd St., New York City
(Gramercy Park)

The Favored Residence of Artists, Writers and Professional people.

Club Life, Restaurant, Swimming Pool, Gym, Library. Spacious Lounges, Roof Garden. Separate floors for men and women.

POSITION WANTED

Personnel Director, Superintendent or managing director desired by young woman. Background: 2 degrees; personnel research and supervision; director group of hotels and dormitories; university teaching; social and economic surveys and reorganization of large institutions; periodical contributions. Address: Box 708, New Republic.

FOR RENT

English style, three year old house, eleven rooms, four baths, steam heat, frigidaire, roll screens, etc. Complete privacy, but only one mile from N. Y. C. commuting station. Includes barn and forty odd acres wooded hillside. Rent $100 per month, furnished, on yearly basis; immediate occupancy. Address: Box 703, The New Republic.

GENERAL

Lucy Maxwell Hodge — Literary Adviser
6 Craigie Circle, Cambridge, Mass.

Trained in leading publishing house. Experienced aid for inexperienced authors from one thoroughly informed concerning standards of publishers and magazine editors.

WRITERS, ATTENTION!

RUSH ME ONLY 25c (in stamps or coin) and I'll send you my latest book, entitled **"How to Become a Writer of Little Blue Books."** It will show you the profitable road to Little Blue Book authorship—how to help me in the great job of writing and publishing 10,000 new books. Address:
E. Haldeman-Julius, Box 200, Girard, Kansas.

BOOK BARGAINS

We have in stock one or more copies of the books listed below, unused and showing almost no shelf wear.

	Our Price
TALLEYRAND, by Anna Bowman Dodd. Putnam. List $5.00..	$1.75
AMERICA, by Hendrik Van Loon. Liveright. List $5.00.....	2.00
DOES PROHIBITION WORK?, by Martha Bensley Bruere. Harper, 1927. List $1.50.....	.70
THE BANKRUPTCY OF MARRIAGE, by V. F. Calverton. Macaulay. List $3.00.....	1.15
EVERY SOUL IS A CIRCUS, by Vachel Lindsay. Macmillan. List $2.75	1.25
THE ARCTIC RESCUE, by Einar Lundborg. Viking. List $3.00...	1.15
THE SONGS OF PAUL DRESSER. Liveright. List $3.50.....	1.50
THE INTIMATE PAPERS OF COLONEL HOUSE, by Charles Seymour. Houghton. 2 vols., boxed. List $10.00.....	4.00
RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KAYYAM, translated by Edward Fitzgerald. Crowell. List $2.50.....	1.15
LINCOLN OR LEE, by William E. Dodd. Century. List $2.00....	.95
LIFE OF JOHN KEATS, by Albert Erlande. Cape. List $3.00	1.25
WITH LAWRENCE IN ARABIA, by Lowell Thomas. Century. List $4.00	1.50
IN BORNEO JUNGLES, by William O. Krohn. Bobbs. List $5.00	1.75
THE OIL WAR, by Anton Mohr. Harcourt, 1926. List $2.50.....	.90
POEMS AND PROSE OF BAUDELAIRE. Modern Library. List $.95	.70
TALL MEN, by James Stuart Montgomery. Greenberg. List $2.00	.90
DR. JOHNSON AND COMPANY, by Robert Lynd. Doubleday. List $2.50	1.00
THE LETTERS OF WILLIAM ROSCOE THAYER, ed. by Charles Hazen. Houghton. List $5.00	1.75
THE STAMMERING CENTURY, 1800-1900, by Gilbert Seldes. Day. List $5.00	2.00
THE LIFE OF EUGENE FIELD, by Slason Thompson. Appleton. List $5.00	1.50
AFTER MOTHER INDIA, by Harry Field. Harcourt. List $3.50	1.25

Postage Free

NEW REPUBLIC BOOKSTORE
419 W. 21st St., New York City

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED